

1 John 4:20-21 (NLT)

If someone says, "I love God," but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? And God himself has commanded that we must love not only him but our Christian brothers and sisters, too.

One of the most awful things we can do as Christians is to have hatred for someone. Remember that Jesus even called hatred in your heart, murder.

† **Matt 5:21-22** *You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.*

We say how much we love the Lord, but if someone does us wrong or even rubs us the wrong way, we get angry with him or her even sometimes to the point of hatred. Jesus even goes on and tells us what to do:

† **Matt 5:23-24** *Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*

You may have heard that sometimes prayers go unanswered because of anger or hatred towards someone else. This may be true in some cases, but as I read this verse, it reminds me to stop saying “*I love you Lord*” in my prayers when I have hatred in my heart towards someone. If I do have hatred or anger towards someone, then I am lying to God. And so are you, read it for yourself in His word.

† **1 John 4:20a** *If someone says, "I love God," but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar;*

I know that sometimes it's hard to love someone, especially if they have done you wrong. But one thing to think about is, “*If Jesus loves them so much that He would die for them, then who am I to hate someone that Jesus loves and died for?*”

Ask the Lord to change your heart and confess your sin to Him, and then confess your sin to the one you hate, even if you think you are right and the other person is wrong. Jesus was right, but still He died for you!

† **Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*