

Can you hate sin because you love the sinner?

The argument of some that you should love the sinner and not think of the sin but hate the bad consequences of the sin is interesting. But you cannot really hate the bad consequences unless you think there is a sin there in the first place! The sin is to blame. The consequences are bad for the sin is bad.

The apostle Jude writes in Jude:

22 Be merciful to those who doubt;

23 save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

This clearly commands seeing others as in danger of hellfire and of YOU having mercy on them. Mercy is what you give when you judge or you can give justice. So you judge their sin and judge them. And you hate the consequences of their sin. Notice the sexual innuendo - hating stained clothing. He wrote, "Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire." Several texts command the Christian to show mercy to the sinner implying judgement. Jesus gave guidelines in Matthew 18 for punishing the stubborn sinner by excluding them.

Love the sinner and hate the sin if possible would mean that you hate the sin because you love the sinner.

But that would be hating the harm a person does to themselves. Its about the harm not the sinfulness so it is not loving the sinner and hating the sin. The Church will not admit what it really means by love sinner and hate sin. It means, "I love the sinner and hate their sin for their sin hurts and will hurt them." That is really hating the damage not the sin. Those who do that are lying that they hate the sin.

Do the believers hate sins that are committed and then immediately repented of? The only damage such sin does is that the person temporarily becomes more bad. The believers do not hate such sins because it is not sin they hate but its side-effect.

Sin can be repented and forgiven and still be doing damage.

Hating the damage tells us some things.

One, it makes me wonder who you think you are to judge how much my sin damages me? An adulterous person could be very unhappy but maybe the unhappiness is down to depression and not so much the sin? The person may even blame the sin and be wrong!

Two, to judge the damage is good training for starting to judge me and a short step away from it. Judging the damage when you can't really walk in the shoes of another is just a hidden and sneaky way of judging the person.

Three, you will think that the more you love someone, the more you will care what sin might do to them. The more you will care about the bad choices they make and you can't be critical of somebody's choice without being critical of them. You are attacking them - period.

Four, many people will feel insulted or under attack because of your attitude and your "love". They will be unable to separate their own self-worth from their choices that hurt them.

Five, LGBT people will be unable to separate their own self-worth from their sexual choices that do not hurt them any more than any other choice does. If you see what they do sexually as sin even when it does little or no harm how can you possibly pretend you are not attacking and judging them? And if you consider their sexuality and activities as intrinsically disordered as the Catholic Church would say, you are saying it is not their true nature. You are saying their sexuality is inauthentic for it is not 'who God made them to be.' You certainly say they are lying should they say their sexuality is an essential part of their nature.

Six, if LGBT people for example think their "sin" often improves their lives the Church has to accuse them of self-deception and duplicity.

Thinking a behaviour is destructive and hating it is not the same as thinking a behaviour is sinful and hating it.

It is hard if not impossible to love the sinner because the term sinner itself is defining a person by their sin. It refuses to see that there may be persons who sin which is not the same as saying they are sinners as if there is nothing else to them.

To really, actually love a person, you have to have a grasp of their feelings and motivations, of their values, of what they hold important and why. This knowledge is the kind people most strenuously try to avoid when it comes to their enemies. If people hate your sin and love you, they will have sat down at length and talked to you and spent time with you to find out what kind of person you are. To teach love the sinner and hate the sin is to urge hatred against others and especially against sinners who you don't know that well.

Christians can do you harm. Then they feel guilt and a need for forgiveness. Why do they look for forgiveness from God? As God comes first going to him for forgiveness matters more than them going to you. They transfer their guilt for how they hurt you to God by pretending it was him they hurt not you. This is appalling. No wonder they soon sin again! No wonder they could still be a danger to you.

Those who hate the sin with the sinner or who doubt that you can really love the sinner and hate the sin even if they think it is possible will feel hated by their enemies and they will expect it. Feeling you are hated and hating breed hate. Hatred grows legs. If the principle is false or too difficult then it is to blame for this state of affairs and we have an explanation for why those who claim to follow it are as bad as those who do not follow it. They are worse though in the hypocrisy they exemplify.