

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 6:16-19

16 There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him:

17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil,


19 a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 6:16-19

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Dealing with difficult people can be downright hard. The broken actions of others can be so challenging to forgive, especially when they hurt you and/or others repeatedly. Their actions and words can have a life altering impact, but so can mine (Ouch!). Recently, I walked through a season where God taught me that fixing my eyes on the broken actions of others brings chaos and sin into my life. These actions and thoughts do not honor God. By focusing on these hurtful actions, my heart became darkened with judgment and pride. I became guilty of the very things that I thought were detestable in their behavior. This was a painful but necessary revelation. In my flesh, I am unable to unconditionally love and forgive those who hurt me. By fixing my eyes on Jesus, His eternal purposes, and relying on the Holy Spirit, I am filled with His gentleness and peace. I can look at these hurtful actions and not take them so personally. I have since confessed these sinful attitudes, asked the Lord to reveal any remaining sin over these issues and left the judgment of their sin to God. What freedom that brings! Afterall, if I'm not careful, I can become a difficult person, too. I am so thankful that my faithful Father never gives up on me and continues to teach me what it looks like to walk closely with Him.

I was reminded of my recent hardship and redirection by the Lord as I read today's passage that deals with issues of the heart. I must admit that upon reading the passage, I thought about a lost person committing such sins. Gosh, there goes that pride again. Haughty eyes or a proud look boil down to prideful thinking. Thinking I am better because I have Jesus or because my sin looks different is prideful and offensive to a Holy God. I can easily forget that



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anything good in me is the result of Christ living in me (Galatians 2:20). If I stretch the truth to aid in helping another look bad, I am guilty of speaking with a lying tongue. I have never committed cold-blooded murder, but I have been guilty of holding unforgiveness against another. Jesus speaks regarding this being equivalent to murder (Matthew 5:21-24). Again, speaking evil against someone for my own personal gain is the result of a heart that devises wicked schemes. When tempted, rushing into sin is the result of feet that have become quick to run into evil. Bearing false witness is akin to the lying tongue and damages people and relationships. I can easily think that I am not one to stir up conflict in the community, but if my heart is working from a hardened state, I am likely to complain to others about the sins of my offenders, speak words that don't build up but harm, or gossip. I can also spread the hurt that I have been inflicted with onto others. The heart condition described in today's scripture does not honor the fact that Christ died for unity. As His image bearers we should seek unity. Ephesians 4:31-32 instructs us to let bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander be put away and be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving as God in Christ has forgiven us. As instructed in Philippians 2:3 we should do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility count others more significant than ourselves.

This scripture has reminded me to beware of prideful thinking. If not controlled by God's Word and His Spirit, my heart can quickly turn to actions that lead to the things that God hates, things that are offensive to Him. Lord, keep refining me; never stop until that glorious day you take me home to be with you.

Questions:

1. Are you holding unforgiveness in your heart towards someone? Consider releasing the judgment for the sins committed against you to God, allowing Him to be the Judge over those sins.
2. Is there a difficult person in your life that frustrates you often? If so, check out this article <https://www.gotquestions.org/dealing-difficult-people.html>.
3. Are you guilty of any sin listed in this passage? If so, I encourage you to confess to God and your community group and find healing (James 5:16).