

Haters (Luke 23:34)

Beacon Light || Lit

Haters gon' hate. It doesn't take long before you realize how true that statement is. In this life we'll have no shortages of haters, and that's just the way it is living in a fallen sinful world. There are any number of reasons why we might have haters. It could be because of our skin color or ethnicity. Or it might be that we're successful and they want what we have. We could even be hated on because of our faith in Jesus Christ. The reasons are endless. So, we might as well accept having haters as a fact of life. But, the question is: how will we respond to the haters in our lives?

The Bible is full of answers on how we should respond to our haters, but the clearest example comes from the life of Jesus. While hanging on the cross, paying the penalty for our sins, Jesus was able to speak the following words about those who were responsible for his crucifixion, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Let's be real, could you utter those words in that situation? Even for the Son of God, I'm sure that wasn't an easy thing to do, especially when he's literally breathing his last few breaths. But, like that song from the *Frozen* soundtrack, Jesus chose to "let it go." His example is one we need to mimic in our own lives when dealing with opposition.

In the hook for his song, Beacon Light says, "Haters gon hate/ Lovers gon hate too/ I don't know about you though/ But I'm looking for a breakthrough/ What you gon do?/ Who you gon be?/ You can hate all you want but as for me/ I love the haters..." When it comes down to it, it's all about building character. Haters help shape who we become. They can either drag us down to their level or push us to higher levels. The Bible teaches us to take the high road. This means we're not avenging ourselves (Romans 12:19), but instead doing good to our enemies (Proverbs 25:21-22), leaving payback in the hands of the Lord.

I like Beacon's response to the haters when in the bridge he says, "They wanna bring that fire like Bowser/ But if they pull that heat I'm a be like steam/ That heat only makes me rise/ I love the haters." Like Jesus, instead of letting our opponents get us off track, we should use it as an opportunity to build character and holiness. Even if our haters don't push us to greater material greatness, we can trust that when we love our enemies and respond in God's character, we are winning in God's eyes. Matthew 5:10 says it best: we're blessed when we face persecution. And it's also proof that we have the Holy Spirit living inside us.

So, when the haters come your way, how are you going to respond? Like Beacon, I say love 'em!

Dig Deeper

1. Read 1 Peter 2:13 and 3:16. According to Peter, how did Jesus handle the haters in his life? What does he then say our response should be?
2. Read James 4:1-3. What are some of the things James lists as reasons Christians fight and hate on one another?
3. Read John 15:19 and 2 Timothy 3:12. As Christians, what comfort can we take from these verses and how should it change how we live our lives? How will it strengthen your faith?

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