

"The world hates you."

*John 15:12-25*

*"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. 13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do what I command you. 15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. 17 "This I command you, that you love one another.*

*18 "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. 20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.*

*22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 "He who hates Me hates My Father also. 24 "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well. 25 "But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.'*

Here is a simple view of John 15 verses 12-25.

/There is a bright red line between verse 17 and verse 18.\ Indeed, the sections on either side of that bright red line are completely antagonistic toward one another.

/In verses 12-17, we have the love of Christ.\

/In verses 18-25, we have the hatred of the world.\

These are polar opposites. They can never be reconciled. There is no gray area, no thin line that can be crossed. A bright red line.

/If you are a believer in Christ, this is your life. \

/In Christ you will be loved.\

/In the world you will be hated. \

We have a vivid illustration of this in the Middle East right now.

IF you are Jewish,

In Israel you will be loved and cared for.

But in Gaza you will be hated with a ferocious, cruel hatred.

That's us as believers in Christ. We are loved beyond measure by God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to remain in their love. In turn, we are to love one another as Christ has loved us. There is safety and love in the body of Christ.

But in the world you will be hated. You will be persecuted.

Here's the good news:

/There is no need to fear the hostility of the world.\

*John 16:33*

*33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."*

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*1 John 4:4*

*4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. 5*

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This morning we are going to examine what Jesus meant when in this passage He said that the world will hate the disciples.

/When He says "the world" here, He is talking about a particular group of people, a particular kind of person.\

/Sometimes the world refers to the human race. For God so loved the world....\  
/Other times the world refers to all unbelievers, in opposition to God.\  
/But here it means a subset of unbelievers. The worst kind of all.\

So this morning we will be in John 15:18-25. We begin with verses 18-19.

*John 15:18 "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.*

/Now these two verses give the general principle.\

Since it is general, it refers to the world in general. And that means it refers to the world of unbelievers, dead in their sins, living according to the god of this world.

The general principle applies to us every bit as much as it did the disciples that evening.

/The world hates Christ.\

Christ called us out of the world. In fact, the word ecclesia (church) literally means the called-out ones.

He chose us to bear fruit that would remain.

And He chose us out of the world.

/Because He chose us out of the world, the world hates us too.\

OK, that's the general principle. It applies to us every bit as much as it applied to the disciples of the Lord.

/Next, Jesus gets specific. He warns about a particular kind of person in the world.\

As we continue to read this passage, it will become evident who these people are.

*John 15: 20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.*

/Who persecuted Jesus during His public ministry, His ministry to the world?\

Well, it wasn't common everyday people. And it wasn't the Gentiles. It wasn't all of the Jews. It was a particular category of Jew.

If you have been following our study of the gospel of John, you most definitely know who this category of people was. In case you need a reminder:

*Luke 19:47*

*47 And He was teaching daily in the temple; but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him,*

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*John 7:32*

*The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him.*

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/Who persecuted Jesus? The chief priests and the Pharisees.\

/So, when Jesus speaks of “the world” in our passage this morning, He is talking specifically about religious leaders.\

That may be shocking to some of you, but it is true.

Religion is satan’s ace trump. In the time we have remaining, I am going to say a few things about religion.

/Religion is the enemy of Christ and the gospel.\

What is religion?

Man fell when Adam sinned. There is none righteous . All have fallen short of the glory of God.

/Religion says that man can and must work his own way back up to God, to holiness, to perfection, to Nirvana, to sainthood, to salvation, to righteousness, to eternal life.\



/Christ says that man cannot work his way back. He cannot save himself.\

He is completely unable to do so. He is dead in his trespasses and sins. In and of himself, man is hopeless.

/His only hope now is for God to act for him. For God to save him.\

And that's what God did.

/God sent His one and only Son Jesus Christ to die for the sin of the world.\

There is no salvation in anyone else. No one comes to the Father but through Him.

*Acts 4:10-12*

*let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead — by this name this man stands here before you in good health.*

*11 "He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone.*

*12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."*

Man has no part in this. He simply listens to the good news about what God has done to save him.

/Man can only believe in Christ, the only Savior, who did the work for him.\

*Eph 2:8-9*

*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

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/This is why religion is evil. It rejects the gospel. It promotes salvation by works. A man by his own efforts can make himself righteous. \

If you are convinced that you have to do something to be saved, you are not a Christian; you are religious.

And believe me religion offers up a myriad of ways to get you to try to save yourself: 5 pillars; an 8fold way; the 4 stages of Hinduism; the sacraments. And on and on. It's all a big fat lie.

/Religion is the cruelest lie. It is promoted by the god of this world.\

*John 8:44*

*44 "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

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/Religion produces self-righteousness and hypocrisy. Romans 2:17-23.\

/Religion spews forth hatred and violence. Acts 13:35, 14:19, 19:23-28.\

*Matt 23:13-15*

*"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. 14 ["Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater condemnation.]*

*15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.*

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/Religion destroys its own followers. It eats its young.\

Religion is nasty stuff. Flee from it! Stay as far away from religion as you possibly can.

/You have been warned...\