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Hated Without A Cause

JOHN 15:18-16:4

Introduction

1. Tonight, I want to draw your attention back to the words which we find in John 15:18-16:4.
2. They were spoken by Jesus to the eleven disciples only hours before His death.
3. He knew how these men would react to his arrest and eventual death.
4. For this reason, He wanted them to know what was coming, in order that they might remember.
5. He also wanted to reassure them they would not be left alone, but that He would send “the Helper,” the Holy Spirit, who would not only “testify” about Him, but would help them to do the same (John 15:26-27).
6. Tonight, as we look at these words of our Lord, let us see what we should come to expect as Christians and why.
7. It is my prayer that when we are finished, you will be strengthened for what my lie ahead, but also recognize the importance of living the life to which we are called.

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I. What Should You Expect ?

A. THE WORLD WILL HATE YOU

“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.”
(John 15:18, NASB95)

1. Jesus said that the world hated Him first. What does He mean by the term

world?

2. When Jesus speaks of the “world,” He is speaking about “a system of values and goals from which God is excluded.”¹
3. Earlier, in John 7:7, Jesus had said, “The world . . . hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil.”
4. Here in verse 22, Jesus said, “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin” (John 15:22).
5. Jesus’ teaching served as a constant reminder to those who were set on living their lives as they pleased that they were rebelling against God.

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B. THEY WILL PERSECUTE YOU

“If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you . . .” (John 15:20).

1. In verse 20, Jesus called upon His disciples to remember something which He had said to them earlier that evening: “A slave is not greater than his master” (John 13:16).
2. At that time, the statement had followed His washing of the disciples’ feet and Jesus applied it to the importance of humility and mutual service.
3. If He, their “Lord and Teacher,” was willing to wash their feet, they should be content to do the same.
4. Here, Jesus applied the principle to persecution: “If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.”

“But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them.” (Mark 13:9, NASB95)

“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children

¹ Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985.

will rise up against parents and have them put to death.” (Mark 13:12, NASB95)

5. As Christians, we should not expect to always live a quiet, peaceful life without persecution:
6. As he told the young evangelist, Timothy, in his final letter: “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12).

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C. THEY WILL REJECT YOUR WORD

“ . . . if they kept My word, they will keep yours also” (John 15:20c).

1. When you and I share the gospel and strive to live our lives in conformity with that of our Lord, we will attract the same antagonism as He did.
2. Some will be convicted by the word of Christ resulting in their obedience to the gospel.
3. Others, however, will reject the words of our Lord and choose instead to live in rebellion.
4. In Acts 7:57-58, we find the result of the message which Stephen spoke to the leaders of the Jews:

“But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse. When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him . . .” (Acts 7:57-58, NASB95).

5. There were many times when the apostle Paul had to leave a city because of those who rejected His word.

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D. THEY WILL KILL YOU

“ . . . but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think he is offering service to God” (John 16:2).

1. Stephen was killed by those who were members of the ruling “Council” of the Jews (Acts 6:12, 15).

2. There was a time in the life of the apostle Paul, before he became an apostle when he was in agreement with putting Christians to death.

“Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him [Stephen] to death.”
(Acts 8:1, NASB95)

“And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.” (Acts 26:10, NASB95)

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II. Why Does The World React In Such A Way?

A. WE ARE NOT OF THIS WORLD

“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.” (John 15:19, NASB95)

1. In Philippians 3:20, the apostle Paul wrote, “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”
2. Because we are not of this world, we do not love the things of this world:
 - a. In 1 John 2:16, John used three phrases to describe such love:
 - 1) “The lust of the flesh” — desire for power, prestige, influence.
 - 2) “The lust of the eyes” — the sinful cravings which are activated by what we see — leads to covetousness.
 - 3) “The boastful pride of life” — pride in our property and possessions.
 - b. As John goes on to point out in verse 17, “the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives (abides) forever.”
3. Instead, we who are Christians . . .

- a. “Keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1).
 - b. “Set [our] minds on things above, not on the things that are on earth” (Colossians 3:2).
4. In 1 Peter 4:3-4, the apostle Peter paints a vivid picture of this difference. “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you;” (1 Peter 4:3–4, NASB95)

Slide 7**B. WE CALL PEOPLE OUT OF THIS WORLD’S DARKNESS**

1. Just Jesus “chose” the disciples “out of the world,” so you and I, as Christians, have been “called” by God “out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).
2. On the road to Damascus, Jesus told Saul, who at the time was persecuting Christians, that He was sending him to the Gentiles “to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God” (Acts 26:18).
3. Though we “were formerly darkness,” now we “are Light in the Lord,” we “walk as children of Light” (Ephesians 5:8).
4. Satan, like the thief of which Jesus spoke in John 10:10, “comes only to steal, kill and destroy,” but we offer people the abundant life which is found only in Christ.
5. Satan ensnares people and holds them captive to do his will (2 Timothy 2:26), we offer them escape.

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C. WE ENGAGE IN GOOD WORKS

“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.”

(John 15:24, NASB95)

1. Jesus went about doing good (Acts 10:38).
2. We strive to follow His example.
3. In Ephesians 2:10, Paul wrote that, you and I, as Christians, “are [God’s] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”
4. Just as the Christians in Ephesus were “to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share ” (1 Timothy 6:18), **so we look for the opportunities to “do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10).**
12. We make every effort to “overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21).
13. Paul taught the Christians in Rome, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head” (Romans 12:20).

Conclusion

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1. Ultimately, the question for each of us is this: “Do you know the Father?”

“But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.” (John 15:21, NASB95)

“These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me.”
(John 16:3, NASB95)

2. There are so many things which God tells us about Himself — He is . . .
 - a. **Love** “. . . God is love.” (1 John 4:8, NASB95)
 - b. **Light**: “. . . God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5, NASB95)
 - c. **Righteous**: “. . . there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me.” (Isaiah 45:21, NASB95)
 - d. **Holy**: “You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.” (Leviticus 19:2, NASB95)
 - e. **Faithful**: “God is faithful . . .” (1 Corinthians 1:9, NASB95)
 - f. **Good**: “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.” (Mark 10:18, NASB95)
 - g. **The sustainer of our souls**: [**David**]: “Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the sustainer of my soul.” (Psalm 54:4, NASB95)
3. None of these things can be said about Satan, or the world over which he rules.
4. Neither can he offer you the things which God offers.
5. God alone, is the one who can change your life for the better.
6. He does this through His only Son, Jesus Christ.
7. Will you give Him your life and follow Him the rest of your days?