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Jn. 15:18-16:4 helps us understand the hatred of the world and tells us to be witnesses to this unbelieving, perishing, blinded world in which we live. In **15:1-17**, we saw how we as Christians are to respond to Jesus and each other. It's so clear: We're to abide in Jesus and love one another! Yet we find ourselves being hated. In **Jn. 15:18-16:4**, we have a contrast, between those who are friends of Jesus and those who are friends of the world (**James 4:4, 1 Jn. 2:15-17**). How are we to respond to a Jesus- and Christian-hating world? World as used in John usually refers to the evil, fallen system comprised of unregenerate people and controlled by Satan. **Eph. 2:1-3** is a good example. The world has developed its own ever-changing morals and standards and value systems, and if anyone doesn't 'conform' to it, the world hates those individuals. In **Mk. 13:13**, Jesus says, "You will be hated by all because of My name." Why does the world hate believers?

Because (1) The world hated Jesus and thus His followers. "The world hated and rejected Jesus, finding in the end no place for Him but a cross." (2) We are chosen by Jesus and are not of the world system and beliefs (we don't conform). (3) The world doesn't know the Father who sent Jesus. (4) Jesus spoke words and did works which revealed the world's sin, and they didn't like their sin revealed. (5) Unbelievers, at least at times, think by their hatred and actions that they are actually offering service to God. They are so duped!

Read 15:18-16:4. :18 "If (Since, Because) the world hates you [and it does!], you (have come to) know (1097) that it has hated Me before it hated you." Consider Him [Jesus] who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself (Heb. 12:3). New Christians are often surprised by the response of friends when they share about their new faith in Jesus. The Roman government regarded Christians as dangerous and disloyal citizens. Why? Because they put the Lord Jesus first. As we believers increase in our intimacy with our Lord Jesus and each other, seeing faith, love, obedience, and fruitfulness, we will have the same effect on the world as our Master.

:19 "If you were of the world, the world would love (phileo, like, friendship) its own [The world would like you as one of its own if you belonged to it]; but because you are not of the world, but I [emphatic!] chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you." The world's hatred of Jesus is a fixed attitude that carries over to His disciples. We are not of the world. Jesus takes responsibility for the world's hatred toward us. The world either likes or hates; it can't agapē love because God is the only source of that kind of love. The world's message is not love but "Conform!" "Raw secularism, greedy materialism, immoral special interest groups seeking privilege or alternative lifestyles which are Biblically indefensible, all with one accord resent the

Christian who stands up and lovingly insists they're wrong!" **1 Pet. 4:1-5, Phil. 3:17-20**. Our identity, beliefs, and walk set us at odds with the world. We are to simply believe and share who He is and what He says, in spite of the world hating what is not of it. The unbelieving world can do nothing else but hate!

:20 "Remember the word (logos) that I said to you, 'A slave (doulos) is not greater than his master.' (These words were first spoken in 13:16.) If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word (logos), they will keep yours also." So, not only does the world hate the believer, but it also actively acts to get rid of Christians—their faith and teaching. The fruit of Jesus is love; the fruit of hatred is persecution (=put to flight, to chase like a wild beast). In persecution, hatred becomes deliberate, not merely accidental. "Yet—if these hearers keep My word, they'll also keep yours." There is hope.

:21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake [They will do all this to you because of Me], because they do not know (3609a, recognize) the One who sent Me [for they haven't recognized the One who sent Me]." Those who reject Jesus do not know the Father (see **17:25**). **Eph. 2:1** says unbelievers are dead in their trespasses and sin. **Eph. 4:18** says they are excluded from the life of God. Their problem is Godlessness (see **16:3**). They are deliberately ignorant of and have rejected the Father.

:22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin [They wouldn't be guilty if I hadn't come and spoken to them], but now they have no excuse for their sin." The world hates Jesus and us because its sin has been exposed. **3:17-20**. Because Jesus has come, the world is robbed of all excuse for its sin. The sin in view is specific: they don't know the One who sent Jesus. The witness of the Person/words/works of Jesus **:22,24**, the word (logos) of God **:25**, the Holy Spirit **:26**, and the disciples **:27**, plus the different witnesses in **5:31-47**. They rejected and hated the One who spoke and acted. They didn't want the Savior, or, they wanted to pick their own kind of savior. The great privilege of having the Son among them. Had He not come to them, they would still have been sinners, but, they would not have been guilty of rejecting Him. "Rejection in the face of total revelation is inexcusable." When God presented Himself in person, He left all of humanity no excuse for rejecting Him.

:23 "He who hates Me hates My Father also." Thinking that they could claim God as their Father (**8:41**) yet at the same time regarding Jesus as demon-possessed (**8:48**)! As Jesus revealed the Father and His love by His teaching, the signs, His acts of compassion, and the way He lived His life, they hated Him, and consequently also His Father. They had seen and chosen to hate Jesus; therefore, they hated the Father also.

:24 "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin [If I hadn't done such miraculous signs among them, they would not be guilty], but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well." Jesus' works endorsed His Person and words. "In Jesus' speech, the Father's words were heard. In Jesus' works, the Father's activity was seen." Look at His miraculous acts of compassion. Yet even His astounding works (7 signs) hadn't convinced them. Thus, they were guilty. If we reject Jesus' Person/words/works, we reject the clearest Light possible.

:25 **“But they have done this to fulfill the word (logos) that is written in their Law** [Yet this only fulfills what is written in their Law], **“THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.”** The Jews’ own Scriptures condemned their choices and rejection. Quoting **Ps. 35:19** and **69:4**, they first refer to king David, who was hated by his enemies. Now the writer John applies these OT words to Jesus. There was no valid cause to hate Him, the sinless Son of God, who only spoke the Father’s words and did His works. What more could He have said or done? The guilt rests on the choices of each person, not Jesus or what He said or did.

Read 15:26-27. :26 “When the Helper [Grk. *Paracletos*, one called alongside to help] **comes, whom I will send to you from the Father that is the Spirit of truth** [But I will send you the Helper—the Spirit of truth] **who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me** [He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about Me].” In these two verses, Jesus reiterated His earlier promise given in **14:16-17,26**, that He would send the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower them. They would not lack the resources they needed after Jesus was gone. This means we’re just to share with the unbelieving world God’s absolute truth, centering on the Person of Jesus. The Spirit will testify to the truth of Jesus within believers, as well as through them. “There is a Helper, penetrating the darkness of unbelief with the light which reveals Jesus as the One He truly is.” This light shines ‘out of’ darkness (**2 Cor. 4:4-6**). The hatred and rejection of the world is not to be a cause of alarm or distress. Yes, our presence and testimony is hated and rejected and we may even be persecuted, yet people are brought to recognize Jesus as the One He is. Proclaim Him and live in such a way so people are confronted with Jesus, knowing the mighty Spirit of God will bear His own witness to Jesus, often through us (**16:8-11**)!

:27 **“and you will testify** [or imperative—and bear witness] **also, because you have been with Me from the beginning** [of My ministry].” You (emphatic!) will testify. The apostles’ lives and words and deeds and even their suffering would be occasions where the Spirit would also be at work. And as the apostles shared the Scriptures and their stories, the Holy Spirit was at work and people were saved. Our response to opposition is to be one of patient witness (a courtroom image). Share God’s truth about Jesus and our story. Usually the witness of the Church and the witness of the Holy Spirit are inseparable. We just tell people about Jesus and what He’s done for us. We just say what we know.

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:3 **“These things they will do because they have not known (1097, come to know, recognize) the Father or Me.** If they hate Me and don’t know My Father, they’ll hate and persecute you also.” Far from serving God, such people do not in any sense know the true God, the Father or His Son. Realize, “We can’t get the world to stop persecuting us by persuasion, education or legislation. This should engender our sorrow, not our hatred.” They haven’t come to know the Father because of who they think Jesus is. Isn’t it amazing: ‘religious people’ will kill believers, thinking they are pleasing the Lord. Paul was an example before he became a follower. These people are our mission field, as they were Jesus’.

:4 **“But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you** [or will remember them, that I told you] **of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning** [I didn’t tell you earlier] **because I was with you.** Now I’m leaving, and I’m letting you know your future, the opposition you’ll now face in My physical absence.” He’s not telling them this to frighten them but to keep them from stumbling. Don’t be surprised when opposition comes. Jesus’ victory is certain, and the Holy Spirit is coming! He’s showing these 11 apostles their need of the Spirit of God. He hadn’t given this warning before because the world’s hatred was directed only against Him. Jesus’ words likely didn’t have much impact on the apostles at that moment, but the Spirit would bring them to mind as they faced tribulation.

Let’s conclude: “Hatred and persecution are normal consequences of living in hostile territory during the great conflict between good and evil, between the Lord and the ruler of this world, Satan.” We are engaged in a great conflict between two realms: the kingdom of God and the world system ruled by Satan: the forces of light and darkness, truth and falsehood, life and death. Our future is no less certain than those eleven apostles on the eve of Jesus’ arrest. Yet what are we to do? Abide in Jesus! Love your fellow believers! Witness to the hostile world! Swindoll: “How to prepare for difficult hours: (1) Rely upon the Holy Spirit to supply wisdom, abilities, and courage. (2) Faithfully proclaim divine truth and stand firm. (3) Keep from being ensnared by evil. (4) Never forget that persecution and the rise of evil are inevitable. Suffering was part of God’s divine plan to redeem humanity. (5) Don’t forget, Jesus will return in triumph.” Abide! Love! Witness! Tell others your Jesus-story! Pray! Joel

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John 15:18-16:4 Some additional NOTES

INTRO These verses introduce the contrast between the kingdom of God and the world. World or a pronoun for it occurs 27 times in this passage; hate appears 7 times. One is characterized by love, obedience, unity; the other by hatred, rejection, and persecution. The love relationship that characterizes the oneness of the Tri-Unity is the same kind of love relationship the Lord desires for His own. “Failing to love one another makes us like the world, which is characterized by hate. Jesus leaves no middle ground between love and hate. We must choose one or the other.”

:18 “After a person had burned his pinch of incense and said Caesar is Lord, a man could go away and worship any god he liked.”

Jesus’ Person, His words (**:22**) and Jesus’ works (**:24**) rebuke them; and the unbelievers will hate us also when our identities, words, and works condemn them. “There is a deep chasm between the world’s love of its own and its hatred for all that Jesus stood for.” It also doesn’t know and hates the Father who sent Him.

:19 If the cause of Jesus is the right one (and it is!), the world hates such exclusive claims and those who make them. The world resents any lack of conformity to itself. “We should be alarmed when the world finds Christians or a church agreeable, for the world only likes its own. A church or individual which is conformed to the world will no longer be recognizable as true followers and friends of Jesus.”

:21 (For Jesus as the One sent by the Father, see on **3:17,34; 5:36-37; 8:18,26,29.**)

:22 “The deliberate & fatal choice of darkness over light and death over life.”

:24 What Jesus had done revealed both His identity and the love of the Father.

:26 God spoke in the Hebrew Scriptures (**Heb. 1:1-2, Jn. 5:39, Lk. 24:44-45**). God spoke through the divine works that Jesus did (**5:36, 10:25,38, Acts 2:22**). The Father directly testified to the Son—at His baptism, at the transfiguration, and in **12:28**. Finally, the Father testified to His Son by sending the Helper. Christian witness is about the Son. The message of the Church is Jesus.

CONCL Yes, today we are attracted by the glory of following Jesus, but sometimes we are not prepared for the difficulty that can come. Count the cost of being His disciple (**Lk. 9:23-24, 14:28-32**).

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NLT 15:18-16:4 "If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. 19 The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. 20 Do you remember what I told you? 'A slave is not greater than the master.' Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you. 21 They will do all this to you because of me, for they have rejected the one who sent me. 22 They would not be guilty if I had not come and spoken to them. But now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Anyone who hates me also hates my Father. 24 If I hadn't done such miraculous signs among them that no one else could do, they would not be guilty. But as it is, they have seen everything I did, yet they still hate me and my Father. 25 This fulfills what is written in their Scriptures: 'They hated me without cause.' 26 "But I will send you the Advocate--the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me. 27 And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry. 16:1-4 :1 "I have told you these things so that you won't abandon your faith. 2 For you will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are doing a holy service for God. 3 This is because they have never known the Father or me. 4 Yes, I'm telling you these things now, so that when they happen, you will remember my warning. I didn't tell you earlier because I was going to be with you for a while longer.

JBP ¹⁸If the world hates you, you know that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own. But because you do not belong to the world and I have chosen you out of it, the world will hate you. Do you remember what I said to you, 'The servant is not greater than his master'? If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you as well, but if they have followed my teaching, they will also follow yours. They will do all these things to you as my disciples because they do not know the one who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. The man who hates me, hates my Father as well. If I had not done among them things that no other man has ever done, they would not have been guilty of sin, but as it is they have seen and they have hated both me and my Father. Yet this only fulfills what is written in their Law—'They hated me without a cause'. ²⁶⁻²⁷ But when the helper comes, that is, the Spirit of truth, who comes from the Father and whom I myself will send to you from the Father, he will speak plainly about me. And you yourselves will also speak plainly about me for you have been with me from the first. **16:1-4** ¹"I am telling you this now so that your faith in me may not be shaken. They will excommunicate you from their synagogues. Yes, the time is coming when a man who kills you will think he is thereby serving God! They will act like this because they have never had any true knowledge of the Father or of me, but I have told you all this so that when the time comes for it to happen you may remember that I told you about it. I have not spoken like this to you before, because I have been with you;