

Hated Like the Father

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[0 : 00] As we watch that video, I trust that two things come to the surface.! One is persecution of Christians around the world is a reality.

! It is overwhelming almost to consider how many of our brothers and sisters around the world are experiencing suffering and persecution! at the hands of those who hate and hate the world.

Hate God and hate the Father. Hate Jesus. It's estimated that as many as 75% of the world's population are experiencing deliberate and hostile persecution day by day.

So we are, as Americans, in the minority really, as it relates to kind of being removed a bit from the persecution that the rest of the world seems to face.

Secondly, what I trust and hope is that what we're seeing in the world will help to spur us on to be praying for our brothers and sisters wherever they might be.

[1 : 15] That God would continue to encourage and comfort and strengthen them to help them to have endurance, to help them to suffer well for the sake of Christ.

And then for us, as we consider as a nation, the coming persecution that is inevitable at some point down the road. We are experiencing some latent forms of persecution, perhaps in your workplace or in the community.

It certainly has begun to come to the forefront, even in the church and the opposition that churches face. But more is coming, and we can certainly expect to see more of it as the time continues.

I want to draw our attention this morning to this theme. I'm sure this is a theme that we all are just really looking forward to studying today.

Hated like the Father. Now, over the past couple of weeks, we've dealt with something that is something that we want to hear. We like to hear.

[2 : 24] We like to hear about being loved by the Father. We like to hear about being friends of the Father. We don't particularly like to hear about the fact that we're also going to be hated.

Like the Father. But in this expression, in our study this morning, there is nothing that will reinforce God's love for you, and nothing that will reinforce God's love for the world through you, like the opposition that you're going to face from the people who are adamant and hostile towards the gospel.

The hatred that you will experience as a believer, the hostility and the suffering and persecution that you may experience as a believer, will magnify the testimony of Christ more in this world than anything else that you could possibly experience.

The suffering that you will endure, perhaps, as a believer, will propel the gospel and will fill your life with the strength of the Spirit like nothing else that you will experience as a believer.

So perhaps, for all that we enjoy talking about the love of Christ and being friends of Christ, for as wonderful as that may be, perhaps for us, as those who desire to have a radiant testimony in the world, maybe there's no better truth for us than to know that we will be hated just like our Father.

[4 : 12] There is a sense of identity. There is a sense of likeness. There is a sense of oneness that can only come as we are willing to walk in the footsteps of Christ.

And as we are willing to walk in the footsteps of Christ, we can expect that we will experience the journey of Christ, who, having encouraged His followers, His disciples in particular, what does He say?

He encourages them to be willing to take up their cross daily and follow Him. There is a privilege, I might say, of being so unified with the Father that we experience the things that the Father experiences, that Jesus experienced on behalf of the Father, the antagonism, the opposition that comes to those who follow after the Father's pattern and similarly follow after the words and the works of Christ.

What will be the stabilizing force for us as believers? Well, it will be the truths that have gone before. The truths that have been filling our discussion the last several weeks as Jesus, in these final hours, these final moments with His disciples before the inevitability of the cross, wants to help them be anchored in the stability of knowing that Christ loves them.

That will be the stabilizing force. That will be the thing that will move them through the suffering that they will certainly experience in the future.

[6 : 03] And those who are satisfied with God, those who drink Him in through genuine and sustained fellowship, it will lead to a worthy life that sets you apart from your peers, from your co-workers, from your classmates, and from your community.

It will put God on display. Isn't that what you want this morning? To make much of God, to put Him on display, to make His love look so satisfying that nothing else can shake you, that nothing else can break you, that nothing else can shatter this relationship with Him.

That's when the gospel becomes compelling, is when the love of Christ is so satisfying that it carries us through whatever we may face.

There is a sweetness and a gentleness and a joy about the believer's life that is not only unmistakable, it's unexplainable.

And that's what makes your life look remarkably familiar. You begin to look like Jesus. And that's the desire of our life.

[7 : 31] Love for Christ will guide your affection and your loyalty. Love for Christ will show what really matters. And it will carry you through difficult times when you're hated like the Father.

So turn with me, if you would, to John chapter 15. We're going to be taking up a significant portion of Scripture this morning from John chapter 15 to chapter 16, verse 4.

We're going to begin in 15, verse 18 and moving through this portion of Scripture that deals with this theme of being hated like the Father. There are a couple of truths, or there are four truths I want us to be reminded of this morning.

Two that relate to the world and two that relate to the believer. There are things that you can expect. There are things that Jesus promises in these final moments with His disciples.

Things that they will see and that will happen for them. Things that they will experience. Let me read for us verses 18 to 21, and we'll begin with this point, the certainty of the world's disdain.

[8 : 48] The certainty of the world's disdain. Let me read these verses for us. Beginning in verse 18. It says, If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.

If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore, the world hates you.

Remember the word that I said to you, a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. But these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know Him who sent me.

You can expect as a believer, you can expect as one who is a follower of Christ, the world will not appreciate your life. There will be a disdain.

[9 : 51] There will be opposition. There will be a sense of hatred towards you because you have a life that emulates Jesus. A life that emulates the Father.

But it seems a little strange, doesn't it? Doesn't it seem a little strange that the person who would be the conduit of love, the person who would emulate the compassion of Christ, a person who would seek to meet needs and to address issues around you with sensitivity and kindness and compassion, be the recipient of hostility?

Seems a little strange, does it not? From the life source of Jesus comes compassion that flows from Christ and reaps a harvest of love in us.

We saw that last week. And it's almost unimaginable that the world, being recipients of such magnanimous love, would turn on the hand that essentially feeds them and seek to consume them instead.

But that's how it was with Christ. That's how it was with Christ's followers. That's how it's been through history. We've seen the accounts of believers throughout history who have suffered injustice.

[11 : 21] And it seems inconceivable that the one who came to Galilee and Judea and virtually rid the entire land of disease, demonstrating compassion indiscriminately to Jewish leaders, to

Samaritans, to those living in Galilee, to those who were Gentiles in Perea, even to officials in Rome.

That Jesus, in demonstrating this kind of compassion, would be the recipient of hatred and ultimately be killed on the cross. Initially, the ministry of Jesus was met with overwhelming positive favor.

We see that in John chapter 2 where it says that the ministry of Christ, it says, many believed in his name and saw the signs that he was doing. But it says, Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them because he knew all people.

He needed no one to bear witness about man for he himself knew what was in man. Jesus knew where this was headed. Jesus knew this was moving to the cross.

Jesus knew the fickle hearts of the people that he was ministering to. He knew that ultimately the kindness and compassion of the Father would be met by hostility.

[12 : 49] It would be met with hatred and they would put him on the cross. And yet, he continued to love them to the end. The antagonism that Jesus experienced throughout his ministry was relentless.

The Jewish leaders in particular hated his message. They hated his miracles. They hated his audacity to forgive sin. They hated that he exerted authority by cleansing the temple.

They hated that he didn't keep their traditions. They hated that he confronted their hypocrisy. He hated that he hung out with sinners. They hated that he kept referring to God as his Father.

They hated that the crowd was so enamored with him as a religious figure. But the biggest reason they hated him was because Jesus exposed the wickedness of their heart.

In John chapter 7, verse 7, Jesus says this, The world hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.

[14 : 00] And for all the kindness and compassion of our Savior, and all the grace of God to identify the biggest hurdle in their life that was keeping them from experiencing the favor of God, their sin, even though he was kind, even though he leaned in, as we've been talking about in Sunday school, he leaned into their mess, was willing to love them in the midst of the difficulties and the sin of their life, and to lead them to deliverance, they didn't want to hear it.

And being confronted with their sin, being exposed in the sight of God, they resented him and hated him and pushed him away. The same will be true of believers.

Those of us who seek to echo and mirror the kind love of Christ for the world. Don't be surprised if the world hates you.

It hated Christ as well. But as we look at this truth, we see the opposite truth taking shape in verse 19. Not only will the world hate you, but be warned if the world loves you.

It says in verse 19, If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

[15 : 32] So don't seek the affection of the world. Don't look for their acceptance. Don't modify your language. Don't soften your convictions.

Don't conceal your light. You have been called to be a light. Ephesians 5, 7-14.

I would just encourage you, keep your finger in John chapter 15. Turn with me for this pertinent passage in Ephesians chapter 5, where Jesus begins to, or excuse me, God through the apostle Paul to the church of Ephesus, begins to describe what you as lights look like.

Jesus says in his great sermon on the mount, You are the light of the world, a city set on the hill that cannot be hidden. Well, what does light do? We find what light does in Ephesians chapter 5.

Beginning in verse 7, it says this, Therefore, do not become partakers with them, for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

[16 : 41] Walk as children of the light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true. And try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.

For anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says, Awake, O sleeper, and to rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

But so often, I think we find ourselves, instead of shining the light of Christ in the world, we find ourselves looking for ways to conceal that light.

Looking for ways to accommodate ourselves to the world by embracing their ideals in terms of the workplace and how to get ahead and the cutthroat culture that is so easy for us to adopt in order for us to get to the places we think we need to be in terms of promotion and advancement and income. [17 : 55] We also find ourselves reinforcing their priorities when it comes to education and athletics and attractiveness and pursuit of the good life.

We find ourselves bending to their pressure, silent about our testimony, a little afraid about the awkwardness of a situation when we let anyone know that we are Christians. we accommodate their preferences. Churches that take pride in certain musical forms that I've heard of even a church or two who have pretty much all secular music and very little that actually calls people to worship God for the sake of drawing the crowd so they can hear the gospel. Of course, there is acceptance of blatant sin in the church. There is an unwillingness for churches to deal with sin and confront sin head on and to lovingly address it for the sake of the soul of the individual who is involved in that lifestyle.

We emulate their tactics. It relates to dealing with authority. We find ourselves, especially as a parent of children in school, I find myself at times resisting the urge of having that conversation with the teacher or taking it to the next level and talking to the principal because that teacher just couldn't get what I was trying to tell them.

[19 : 29] One thing I appreciated about my upbringing was I would come home with a complaint and my dad always took the teacher's side. It drove me bananas.

But one thing it did was it reinforced the authority structures that God had put in my way to help me understand the significance of respecting the authority that God has for us.

But we find ourselves emulating their tactics. We're going to take it to Capitol Hill. We find ourselves, instead of praying about issues, that we complain about issues.

we make it public. We put it all over social media, whatever it takes to get the word out and get people on board instead of turning it over to God to deal with.

And we are captured by their philosophies, philosophies of parenting, philosophies of family. We find ourselves not showing the light of Christ in that way.

[20 : 34] And we're made numb by the way they try to inculcate culture. The slow descent into tolerating and supporting their agenda as it relates to the movies we watch or the music that we listen to, the sporting events that we participate in.

There is very little distinctiveness in us that would call people to the distinctiveness of our great God. No wonder why we aren't experiencing the pushback from culture because we look so much like the world.

Jesus moves on in verse 20. Remember the word that I said to you. A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you.

Does your life show the sweetness and the wonder of Jesus? Does it point to your master? Does it show his greatness?

Does it put him on display? Not only his love for sinners, but the way to deal with sin. The answer for sin that comes through faith in Christ.

[21 : 52] Removing guilt and removing sin. Being cleansed by his life. Love for Christ will guide your affection and your loyalty.

Love for Christ will show what really matters. Especially when the world disdains you. Jesus moves on. He moves on to helping his disciples understand that although the world may disdain them and hate them, there is an inevitable consequence.

There will be judgment for them. The certainty, the second point, the certainty of the world's demise. The certainty of the world's demise. We see that here in verses 22 to 25.

Let me read this for us. 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.

Whoever hates me hates my father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen and hated both me and my father.

[23 : 06] But the word that is written in their law must be fulfilled. They hated me without a cause. There will be judgment on the world.

And one question that might come to the surface as you're considering why are there people who are in the camp of belief and individuals who are in the camp of those who do not believe, especially during Christ's day.

Was something concealed from them? Was there a truth that they missed somehow? Did Jesus leave this crowd by the side and failed to address them and to deal with them appropriately? And we find that here in this group of verses that Jesus' ministry to them was just the same as his ministry to the disciples.

They heard the same word. There was gracious revelation to them. The same revelation that the disciples received we saw as an expression of Christ's love for them.

[24 : 18] At the latter part of John chapter 15 and here in verse it says in verse 15, he has given them, I made known to you what was given to me by the Father.

Revelation went to the disciples but revelation also went to those who refused to believe. The world is without excuse. And we have addressed this on numerous occasions.

that the word that was communicated by Christ was word that was first directed by the Father.

Perhaps standing at the forefront if we just turn back a couple of pages to John chapter 12, we see this in verse 49.

John chapter 12 verse 49 says, For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who has sent me has himself given me a commandment, what to say and what to speak.

And some translations have what to say and how to say it. Jesus' life in ministry was so guided by the Father that not only the words that he spoke but the way in which he spoke those words were influenced by the Father's direction.

[25 : 39] And so to reject the message of Christ is to reject the message from the Father. Jesus says, Whoever hates me hates my Father as well.

This is the epitome of rebellion. Hatred of God the Father. The God of the Jews was not the God of the Bible.

Their God was a figure of their tradition. Their God was an image of their own making. And when they had their God right in front of them in full view speaking the words of the Father, they called him an imposter and they put him on the cross.

The danger for us as we consider the words of Christ, will we accept the truths that Jesus has so clearly communicated to us in the word?

Jesus was clear about his identity. Seven times in the Gospel of John he says, I am, and we have looked at them throughout the course of our study.

[26 : 50] I am the door. I am the good shepherd. I am the light of the world. I am the bread of life. I am the vine. I am the resurrection and the life. Jesus was the way to God.

Jesus was God in the flesh. And if you don't have Christ, you don't have God. That was the message that came through loud and clear through the testimony of Jesus' words.

Not only did Jesus say the words of the Father, but his words were confirmed through his works. And that comes next. We see that here in verse 24.

If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty. So not only are they condemned by rejecting the words of Christ, but they are rejecting him even in light of the works that he did, that authenticated him, that validated his ministry, that proved that he was the person he claimed to be.

Jesus, in a confrontation with the Pharisees, back in John chapter 10, alludes to this, speaks of this. He says in John chapter 10, verse 25, they ask him the question, Jesus, okay now, tell us plainly, are you the Christ?

[28 : 17] And Jesus says, in verse 25, he says, I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear testimony about me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock.

Dropping down to verse 37, if I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father.

The miracles of Jesus confirmed his identity. Jesus faithfully brought this truth to the forefront. And if you remember the story of the paralytic, the standing room only in this house that Jesus was ministering to, and then all of a sudden they see the rafters beginning to be removed from the ceiling, and now this figure of an individual being lowered down in front of Christ.

And Jesus looks at this man on this little stretcher and says, your sins are forgiven. And the Pharisees, it says, they grumbled in their heart, who is this person who can forgive sins?

Only God can forgive sins. To which Jesus says, you're right. So, what's easier to say? your sins are forgiven or rise and take up your bed and walk.

[30 : 03] And Jesus, turning to the man, tells him, rise, take up your bed and walk. The paralytic gets up, walks right out of the house, and gives testimony to the fact that Jesus not only has the words of God, Jesus shows the work of God and confirms that he was God himself.

And in spite of the great show of Jesus' identity, the clear and unmistakable fact that he was God, they still refused to acknowledge him.

And as a result, Jesus talks about, in Matthew chapter 11, his condemnation on those cities who were so faithfully heard the word and yet still rejected.

When the world sees confirmation of Christ in you, through your steadfast faith and unwavering joy, it will either lead them to Christ, or will lead them to rebellion.

Do the people in this world see the testimony of Christ playing out in your life? Are you an individual who is so full of Christ that it shows up in the world?

[31 : 25] Not only through your words, but through your works that confirm there's been a transformation in your life. That's what will be the mark of helping them to come to terms with the reality of the gospel.

Now we move to this next promise. It moves from the world and now moves to believers. We see in verses 26 to 27 the certainty of the believer's divine help.

The certainty of the believer's divine help. Let me read verses 26 and 27. It says, but when the helper comes, whom I will send you from the father, the spirit of truth who proceeds from the father, he will bear witness about me.

And you also will bear witness because you have been with me from the beginning. This is the third statement in these short few moments of time that Jesus has with his disciples in these final hours of drawing their attention to the promise of the spirit's coming.

We see it in John chapter 14 verse 16. John 14 verse 26. We see it here in this verse in chapter 15 26 and we'll see it two more times in chapter 16.

[32 : 49] Jesus is interested and wants to encourage his disciples with the fact the Holy Spirit is coming. Times may be tough.

Suffering may come. Hardship may confront you but you will have help. Help from the Holy Spirit. One commentator puts it this way.

The Holy Spirit's primary ministry to the lost world is to testify about Jesus. Let me say that again.

The Holy Spirit's primary ministry to the lost world is to testify about Jesus.

If your words and your life is not dominated by testimony about Jesus and what Jesus has done for you, I would say that we need to take caution.

we need to ask God to do that work in our life because if the Spirit is indwelling you, it will show up in giving testimony about Christ. One of the clear evidences of the Spirit in your life is that you will have a message of Christ.

[34 : 04] It will not only fuel your passion but it will dominate your speech or your words saturated in the words of Christ.

and do your words reflect the expression or the quality of Christ's words. We could go to a number of passages and look at the quality of Christ's words but I think there are, I wish we had time to look at three verses this morning but I want to just call your attention to three qualities and write this down, you can look at it on your own.

Luke chapter 4 verse 22 says this, all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth.

So what quality would you look at did they recognize? They recognized gracious words. Do you have speech that is dominated by grace?

Do you have speech that is dominated by appreciation? Not complaining? Not criticism? But thankfulness? Mark chapter 1 verse 27 is another quality of Jesus' words.

[35 : 21] It says, And all marveled so that they questioned among themselves saying, What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him.

Not only did Jesus have gracious words but Jesus had authoritative words. You can exercise the authority of Christ not because you are an authoritative person but because you have authoritative words.

And I'm not talking about casting out demons so please don't misunderstand. What I'm talking about is the conviction that comes because you hold to one truth. You're anchored in the singularity of the message of the Bible.

That's what gives you confidence. Not your experience. Not your past successes. But what gives you the ability to speak authoritatively in a situation is that the Bible has spoken authoritatively. And as a pastor I may not understand your specific situation but I can give you authoritative words based upon the scripture because God has the news.

[36 : 32] He has the answer that we can give to a world that is so desperate for answers. The third quality and there are many others. The third quality is found in Mark chapter 6 verse 2.

It says on the Sabbath he began to teach the synagogue and many who heard him were astonished saying where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him?

How are such mighty works done by his hand? We see that Jesus also had wise words. wise words. You have the wisdom of God.

You have the truth of God at your disposal. You have the ability to speak words of life into people. Wisdom for their future. Wisdom for relationships.

Wisdom for their workplace. Wisdom for family. Not because you are this well of wisdom but because you have tapped in to the source of wisdom as Jesus did.

[37 : 36] I think one of the clearest evidences in our speech that God has transformed us has to do in our response to suffering when it comes.

Our thankfulness and gratitude in spite of hardship. We see verses like rejoice evermore in everything give thanks. Count it all joy when you fall into various trials.

Bless those who curse you. Bless and curse not. How can anyone do such things? Well, it can only be done through the power of the Spirit working in your life.

And finally to close, we'll get to point number four next week. I've got one more week to go. We'll just combine it with the next few verses of chapter 16.

Okay? I want to give this appropriate time. Not only does the Spirit testify of Christ, and this may be one of the neater truths for us today.

[38 : 46] One commentator says, the work of the Spirit in the church is done in the context of persecution. The Spirit is not a guide and helper for those on a straight way, perfectly able to manage on their own.

He comes to assist men caught up in the thick of battle, and tried beyond their strength. Jesus makes it quite plain that the way before his followers is hard and difficult way.

You want the Spirit to show up in your life? You will be strong in the face of hardship. You will not buckle. You will not resist it.

You will not push it away because you will welcome the power of the Spirit in your life. As Peter later says in 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 12, he says this and I'll close with this verse.

He says, don't be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you as though something strange were happening to you, but rejoice in so far as you share in Christ's afflictions so that you also may rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

[39 : 59] If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

You want the Spirit to show up in your life? be willing to embrace his strength in the midst of considerable weakness. That's when he'll show up.

And you want to magnify the wonder and sufficiency of Christ in this world? Rejoice that you get to emulate and mirror the life of Christ in facing persecution just like Jesus did.

Well, love for God will show up in our life through a love for the world in spite of the persecution that you face.

May God help us to love him that way and to show his sweetness to the world in the face of hardship. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you.

[41 : 11] this morning for the love of Christ that anchors us in the storm. Thank you, Lord, for the assurance of love from Christ that helps us to understand that nothing we face in this life is an accident.

Nothing that we face in this life is in vain. It's all meant to push us and to draw us into closer relationship with you and to make the sweetness of Christ, the testimony of God attractive in this world.

So, Lord, I pray that you would continue to do a work in our hearts. Help us to be so caught up with the love of Christ that it stabilizes us when hardship comes.
and may we show how wonderful you are through our steadfastness in our faith and looking forward to the hope of your return. We praise you, Lord, for all that you have accomplished for us and particularly for the helper that you have given to us through the Holy Spirit to come and indwell us and to strengthen us in life's endeavors.
We praise you in Jesus' name. Amen.