

Loved By God, Hated by Man

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Date: 31 December 2023

Preacher: Treg Hallman

[0 : 00] Well, I have the privilege this morning of preaching, and as you all know, I like to move around a little bit, so I end up standing here in front. We will continue this morning in the book of John.

The last time that Jonathan preached on the book of John, it was in John 15, the first part of John 15. And this morning we will pick up mid-way in verse 17 in John chapter 15.

And in honor of God's Word, I would ask if you would, if you're able, if you would please stand as we read His Word this morning. I'll read, if you would, if you have your Scriptures in hand, if you would follow along as I read for us this morning.

Starting in verse 17, chapter 15. These things I command you, so that you will love one another. If the world hates you, know that it 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.

[1 : 08] 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 all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know Him 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. 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. But the word that is written in their law must be fulfilled. They hated me without a cause.

But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to 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.

[2 : 11] I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think that he is offering service to God.

And they will do these things because they have not known the Father nor me. But I have said these things to you that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told them to you.

Let's pray. Father, open our mind that we might understand your word this morning. Open our ears that we might hear it and move our hearts to desire you.

Fill us with a desire to honor and serve you. I pray in Christ's name. Amen. And you have a seat. In the 1930s, in the country of Russia, the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917 and following.

And the Bolsheviks persecuted Christians, even killing them. There was a man, a particular man, that in his village, his brother had been killed by the Bolsheviks.

[3 : 29] And he, out of fear of being killed himself as a Russian Orthodox, he fled into the Siberian wilderness with his family, his wife and his two children.

And they went deep, deep into the Siberian wilderness and lived there for the next 42 years, not coming back to where the place where they had left.

They were themselves, their family were in the wilderness for this incredible time frame. On the edge of starvation continually. Very, very difficult for them to exist in this place way out in the wilderness.

They had taken a couple of kettles to cook with. They had taken a cup full of seeds to be able to plant with. And they had taken the shoes on their feet and they had fled.

And the world would not even have known they had gone there. With the exception of this is that because of the exploration of iron ore, the Russian government had sent geologists into this

Siberian wilderness to explore to see what natural resources were there.

[4 : 38] Prior to the exploration of a helicopter had flown over, and this is in the 1970s, had flown over this area in Siberia and spotted this area that couldn't be explained.

It was an area where the trees had been leveled. It was an area where they saw rows that appeared to be crops or plants that had been planted. In this place, it was 150 miles from nowhere, from any civilization.

And so they had told the geologist about this spot, and the geologist had come up and they began to place gifts in the clearing in this area where a cabin was visible and they had cleared and they had planted crops.

They placed gifts as a way to let them know that they were there. They didn't want to scare them off. They wanted to somehow engage this family that they had not met, did not know were there, did not know where they were from.

Finally, the family chose one of the gifts. It was salt. You can imagine in that setting to have salt would be a blessing and a gift. And gradually, they began to engage with this family that was there.

[5 : 48] And finally, they met the father of this family who, by that time, was in his 70s. And when they got there, the father invited them into this very rustic, dirt floor cabin that had been built by this family that had stood for 40-plus years.

They walk in and two daughters that were there when they saw these geologists, they ran and hid. Now, these two daughters had never seen the world that their father and mother came from.

They were born in the wilderness. And all they had ever known was one family and the difficulty of trying to survive in the Siberian wilderness. When these people came in, they were in great fear.

They did not even know another world existed. They had never seen it. To them, it was a story that they heard, but they didn't really know existed.

It was a world they had no idea there was such a thing as cars and planes and roads and light and grocery stores and gas stations. They never knew it even existed.

[7 : 00] This morning, as we look at our text, we're going to see that there's two worlds spoken of in this text. If we look with me at verse 19, I want to show you what John is trying to reveal here.

Christ speaks and he says, if the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you. He's referring to this world, and you see the divide between these two worlds.

This world that Christ has come into, this world that hates Christ. Notice what he says. If you were of this world, the world would love you as its own.

But because you are not of this world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Do you see the two worlds? It's this world that all of us are born into.

Now this is something that we've read much about, we've heard preached on often, but I want to remind us what that world is, this world that we've been born into.

[8 : 08] You know, all of us were born into sin, right? We're born in Adam, is a phrase we've heard often, into this kingdom of darkness. Physically speaking, all of us are born in sin.

Spiritually speaking, we're born separated from God, right? We're born as enemies to God because we're born in sin. Look with me, or don't turn there, I'll just read a couple of verses here that talk about this dark world, this dark kingdom, this world that Christ is referring to that hates him and hates believers.

In 1 John, it talks about it this way, do not love the world, this is John, the same author speaking, do not love the world or the things in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. You see the vast divide here? For those who love this world, by definition, don't love the Father because there's such a divide between the two.

The values of this world and the values of the Father are infinitely far apart. I continue here.

[9 : 25] If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life is not from the Father, but is of the world.

You hear what he says? The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the boastful pride of life. It's a focus on self. It's a fleshly living.

You know, that's the way that we were born. We were born self-focused. We were born as those who live for self. That's what's declared in the Word.

Remember in Romans 3.23, all have sinned and do what? We all fall short of the glory of God. Hear what James says in his general epistle.

Here's how he says it. He says, Friendship with the world, and I'll start at the sentence. Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

[10 : 21] Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself the enemy of God. You hear it? If we're part of this world and the system of this world, by definition, we're enemies to God.

Those who long to be a part of this world, who long to walk by the course of this world, we're enemies to God. In 2 Corinthians, we get a picture.

Paul is talking to the Corinthian church and he's talking about this same concept, this worldly system. You know, when I say world, I'm not talking about the planet. I'm not talking about parts or other countries, parts of the world.

We're talking about a system. We're talking about a way of thinking. A way of living. This living in this dark kingdom. This separation from God.

Listen to what Paul says to the Corinthians. He says, in their case, that is the case of those who are not in the kingdom, the case of those who are not Christians whose life hadn't been changed by the touch of God.

[11 : 30] Here's what he said. In their case, the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.

Think about it. There is a God of this world. Who is he? Satan. Do you know that when we were born into this world, that we were subject to the God of this world, we were subject to Satan?

Do you know that the way we lived honored Satan and dishonored God? That the way we live, the desires of our flesh, dishonored God and we all walked in it.

That's the way we used to live before we came into the kingdom, before we were born again, before we became Christians by the work of God. Notice what it says.

The God of this world has done what? He has blinded the mind of unbelievers. Why? To keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God.

[12 : 35] The enemy hates everything to do with the kingdom of God. Satan hates everything to do with God and anything that honors God.

Paul talked to the Christians in Ephesus and he shared with them about who they used to be. And you know this is true for all of us.

We all used to be like this. What Paul says to the Christians in Ephesus. He says this, past tense.

And if we, for those of us here that have been born again, this is true for us in a past tense way.

That we used to also live like this. Listen. It says, but you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked.

Following the course of this world. Let me stop there for a second. Do you know that we used to follow the course of this world? We used to live in a way that the world lives in a system that the enemy controls?

[13 : 42] Do y'all believe that? Do y'all recognize the depravity that we walked in the way we used to live? You once walked following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

Listen. Listen. We once walked in the course of this world. We once followed the prince of the power of the air. Who is that? It's the God of this world.

It's Satan. Do you realize that even though we didn't cognitively know it, we were walking in the ways of Satan? We were walking in the ways of this world. We were walking in darkness.

Back to John 15.

I want us to see that God has done something. Christ has done something. Sorry. Christ has done something amazing here. And in verse 19, he declares it.

[14 : 48] He's speaking to his disciples and he says this to them. He says, if you were of this world, the world would love you. But you're no longer of this world.

Something had happened in their life. And what was it? We see it in verse 19. He says, I chose you out of the world. God chose him out of the world.

Brothers and sisters, you realize that for those of us who have been born again, we've been delivered from this world. This world, you know, when we were first born, we didn't know that there was another world.

We didn't understand that there was a spiritual world. We didn't even understand, at least for me, and I think you would probably say the same, is we didn't realize that the way we were living was in absolute opposition to God.

It's as if we didn't even know that world existed until God opened our eyes, right? It says, the God of this world had blinded the mind of unbelievers. We did not even realize we were enemies of God until God showed us our sin.

[15 : 59] The beauty of what he did is spoken of by Paul in Colossians chapter 1. And it says this. It says, He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of his dear son.

These two worlds that are far apart, this world of darkness and this world of light, this world of Satan and his rule and this world of Christ and his rule is so drastically different.

And what God has done for these 12 and what he's done for you and me is he's called us out of this world of darkness and he's translated us into the kingdom of his dear son, the kingdom of light.

He's taken our heart of stone and he's given us a new heart, a desire to live for him. Ephesians also talks about this too.

It says this. For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. At one time you were darkness, you were living in darkness, serving the enemy, but now you are children of light and he calls for us to walk in this way, this walk as children of light to change the way we live.

[17 : 25] It's interesting here where we are in the last week of the life of Christ. As Christ is heading toward the cross and very soon in the text he will be arrested and he will be taken to the cross and he will die as a criminal hung on a cross.

But notice what he does for the sake of the apostles. He is mentioned to them prior back in chapter 13 he says, a new commandment I give you and that commandment is to love one another.

You know what Peter says in this encounter in chapter 13? He says, I'm willing to die for you. I love you. I'm even willing to die on behalf of the kingdom.

And you know what Christ says to him? He says, Peter, even this very night the cock will not crow three times before you I mean twice before you have denied me three times. Left to ourselves in our own ability notice what tends to happen is that we fall away.

We're not able to love him in the way that he's calling us to love him. Love one another with this new power that is the power of the Holy Spirit. Notice what he said to Peter.

[18 : 44] Peter, even this night though you desire to love me you're not able in and of yourself. That's why I'm sending a helper the Holy Spirit. And we see he says the helper the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name he will teach you of all these things.

Teach you what it's like to live. He will empower you to be faithful as witnesses. So as we as we come to chapter 15 what Jonathan preached about two weeks ago here's what Christ says to them he says to abide in me.

Abide in me. Why? In order that you might produce fruit. You know the call of God for you and I is to abide in him is to live for him is not to be drawn back into the kingdom of this world to live for that kingdom but to live for him to honor him and to abide in him.

So looking at verse 17 I want us to see the relationship between abiding and love. So the call is in verse 17 is this these things I command you so that you will love one another.

What things? What things are you commanding? He's saying abide in me. Abide in me and live this life of abiding in order that fruit might be produced through your life because there's coming a time he would say there's coming a time when the world is going to hate you just like it hated me.

[20 : 23] He's telling them before it happens he says listen if the world hated me the world's going to hate you because you're no longer you're no longer of the world you're no longer part of their system you've been changed fundamentally you're a different person now because I've chosen you out of the world and I've chosen you out of the world and I've also given you a helper that is the Holy Spirit who will be in you he will live in you he says but let I want you to know that this is coming that the world is going to hate you when you begin to live for me and serve me the world is going to hate you not only is it going to hate you it's going to persecute you Christ says in verse 20 if they persecuted me they will also persecute you be aware disciples be aware apostles that suffering is coming here's what I want to share with you and I do you think this would be true for you and I as well so church we used to live in this world that was ruled by Satan and by the grace of God he's delivered us out of that world he's translated into his kingdom he's changed us from the inside out he's given us a new heart and he's given us this call to live for him this call to abide in him in order

that love might spill out of us did you catch that these things

I command you what do you command us Christ command you to abide and to produce fruit fruit is the result of abiding why so that you will love one another the call of God in your my life is to love one another in our own strength we're not able but because we've been transformed and the Holy Spirit has been given to us church now we're able to live this life of abiding and the love of God would spill out of us to touch the world here's the expectation for you and I certainly was the expectation for the apostles in that day that they would be hated that they would be persecuted and in chapter 16 they would be rejected and they would be killed verse 16 verse chapter 16 verse 2 they will put you out of the synagogue indeed the hour is coming when they will kill you excuse me whoever kills you will think that he is offering service to God what Christ I believe is sharing with the apostles is this is there's coming a day now that you are no longer a part of the world system now that you have been transformed by my work in your life that the world is going to hate you and be against you you can expect to be persecuted you can expect to suffer you can expect that they're going to reject you even perhaps they're going to kill you and we know for the apostles that 11 out of the 12 were martyr for the faith now here's the question for us do we think that that's the same for us do we think that we're going to suffer because we're Christians that we're going to be persecuted in some way you know in certain parts of the world that persecution might be that we would have to die that we would be put to death certainly in Somalia and Pakistan and other countries that is still true today in China for those who live they have to be a part of the church underground for fear that they'll be arrested and jailed for us is it true that if we really genuinely stand for Christ we really seek him and we stand for what's true might we also be persecuted probably not put to death but certainly ostracized certainly laughed at certainly not a part of what the world is doing whatever form that suffering might take are we willing to walk that road are we willing to be faithful to him in the midst of the persecution notice in 16 1 it says this

I have said these things to you to keep you from falling away what was the result what happened to the apostles after Christ was arrested do y'all remember what the scripture says they scattered didn't they you know what he said to them is he said I want you to go he came back and he showed himself again for 40 days after he ascended I'm excuse me after he resurrected and he said I want you to go to Jerusalem and I want you to wait wait for what wait for the power of the Holy Spirit you know when Pentecost happened and the power of God the power of the Holy Spirit came and rested on them and ultimately in the new covenant dwelt within them they were different men right these same men that fled when Christ was arrested these same men began to stand and proclaim the gospel with power in the face of those that is the

Jewish nation the Jewish leaders who had already threatened them that they were going to lock them up or even kill them if they didn't quit preaching this message of the gospel that same message these same people after the power of the Holy Spirit had come upon them began to be bold and began to be a witness for Christ Acts 1.8 says this it says he tells them to go to Jerusalem and he said that there's coming a time when the power of the Holy Spirit will come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem Judea Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the world brothers and sisters you know that that same thing is true for us that the Holy Spirit has come and he has called us to be witnesses he's called us to live differently to love and to be bold in speaking the truth of the gospel are we willing to do it do you still do you feel like that that that there's a difference between us that is the church and the the way that the world operates do you see the divide do you feel that it's increasing in the U.S.

even now there seems to be a separation is it difficult to be faithful to Christ in our walk I think more so now than ever before I think about kids in high school and how much more difficult it is to stand for Christ nowadays to be faithful in the way we live it's more difficult now than it has been in the U.S.

[27 : 16] and the call for each of us is to faithfully live for him even though we might be in some way persecuted pray with me Father I pray that you would give us courage to be faithful in our walk I pray that you would help us to be bold to speak the truth to be witnesses for you in the midst of a world that's in opposition to you those who are not Christians those who don't know you and the need they have for the truth of your word God give us boldness to share your word with all that we come in contact with Father give us doors of opportunity I pray that you would strengthen us and encourage us in Christ's name Amen