

Jesus Warns about the World's Hatred

John 15:18-16:4

In the first half of this chapter Jesus told the disciples that when He is gone they must love another all the more. Now He tells the disciples that they must be ready for the persecution that will come as a result of their proclamation of Jesus as the Savior of the world. The blessings of fruitful living, union with Jesus, joy, and answered prayer are contrasted with the reality of an adversarial world.

“...they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue.” – John 9:22

Read: John 15:18-16:4

v.18-19 – We do not belong to this world. We've been called according to God's purpose. William Whiting Borden was a graduate of Yale University in 1909 and of Princeton Theological Seminary. Borden was converted to Christianity under the ministry of Dwight L. Moody. He later decided to become a missionary to the Muslims of China, but died of spinal meningitis in Egypt during his training there at the age of 25. After his death, Borden's Bible was found and given to his parents. In it they found in one place the words "**No Reserve**" and a date placing the note shortly after he renounced his fortune in favor of missions. At a later point, he had written "**No Retreat**", dated shortly after his father told he would never let him work in the company ever again. Shortly before he died in Egypt, he added the phrase "**No Regrets**".

v.20-21 – Jesus will soon experience persecution by the world, even to the point of death. His true followers and those earnestly willing to proclaim the same message that brought such hardship should expect no less.

Look up: Matthew 5:11-12

Caution: We must be careful how we claim verse 21a. It is far too easy to say: "*That person doesn't like me because I'm a Christian*". Perhaps that person doesn't like you because you're unlikeable. Waving a banner of Christ does not give permission for hurtful speech (rationalized by calling it "*truth in love*"), a superior attitude, or judgmental remarks.

v.21b-25 - Ignorance of the Father is not an excuse because of the witness Jesus has displayed. In this reference sin is understood as lack of faith in Jesus, and further, hatred of Him and His Father. The opponents do not think they hate God, but such is the case given their hatred of Jesus. Look up: John 14:11, Romans 1:20

v.26 –The Holy Spirit is described as "*Counselor*" and "*Spirit of Truth*". The first conveys the helping, encouraging, and strengthening work of the Spirit. The latter refers to the teaching, illuminating, and reminding work of the Spirit.

Look up: John 14:26

v.27 - Jesus is speaking directly to the eleven disciples in these chapters (13-17). They have been with Him for the whole trip so they can tell the whole story. (Ref: replacement of Judas - Acts 1:21-22)

Because the Gospel is an account of what God himself has said and done while the "*Word became flesh*", the account of eyewitnesses is crucial. The Gospel of John is itself an example of the witness referred to in verse 27. This eyewitness testimony is now available through the New Testament. Look up: Romans 10:17

v. John 16:1-2 - Jesus warns that expulsion from the synagogue and even death awaits the disciples (Matthew 10:17, Mark 13:9). Such martyrdom began with Stephen (Acts 7:54-60) and continued for the other disciples and outspoken believers (Acts 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 11:23-25, Revelation 2:13). Look up: Luke 21:12

v.3-4 - The knowledge of the Father and the Son, which is the very source of the disciples' joy and peace, will also be the cause of their troubles in the world. Jesus tells them about these troubles ahead of time so they will not go astray.

Disciples of Christ today also need to hold tightly to the teachings of Christ in order to be ready for times of persecution or temptation. Jesus here provides an example of pastoral care. It is part of the mature believer's duty to ensure that newer believers receive such preparation so they will continue on and not fall away.