

“An Offense To The World”

John 15:18-27

Message by Michael J. Barnard

February 20, 2022

Teaching Aim: To understand the reason that the world hates Jesus Christ and His followers. To realize a servant is not greater than his Master; if they persecuted the sinless Son of God, they will persecute us for following Him. To recognize every believer is called to take a public stand for Jesus, no matter what the cost. To realize, we don't have to face this persecution alone, the Father and the Son have sent the Holy Spirit to be our *“Paraclete”* (our Advocate) as we bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD'S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: If the world system hates you, know that it hated Jesus first (John 15:18-22)

1. As we rapidly approach the last days, it seems like persecution in the world against Christians is increasing. More Christians died for their faith in the 20th century than in any other century in history. Christians stand in the way of the Satan's sin filled agenda, he and followers can't stand born-again Christians because of that. Jesus uses the word *“hate”* 8x in the remaining verses of **John chapter 15**. What truth can we learn from **verse 18**? Why do you think the Jewish religious establishment hated Jesus with a passion? (See **John 1:9-10; 3:19-20**)

2. Jesus openly warned His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount that one day His followers would be severely persecuted. Is this kind of persecution a blessing or a curse for the true believer in Christ? Why? (See **Matt. 5:10-12**)

3. What *“created being”* hated Jesus more than any other? Did Satan believe that Christ's death on the cross would be his biggest victory? What did the cross turn into? Satan and the world system hate regenerate (or born-again) Christians who stand for the truth. How are you as a Christian preparing to live in a hostile world? (See **2 Tim. 3:2**)

4. Jesus did not promise us health or wealth, He promised us that if we obediently follow Him we will suffer persecution. (See **2 Tim. 3:12**) Have you ever suffered persecution for your faith in Christ? If not, should you examine your walk to see why? Is there enough evidence in your life to convict you of being a Christian in a court of law? If not, what needs to change?

5. Many people fight back one way or another when persecuted. How should the Christian respond? (See **Matt. 5:44-45b**) Why is it important for us to love, even when persecuted?

6. What truths can be learned from **verse 19**? When Jesus chose us out of the world, he brought us out of the world system controlled by Satan. What amazing event takes place at regeneration (or the moment of salvation)? (See **2 Cor. 5:17**) The fact that we are a new creation in Christ only agitates the god of this world (Satan) all the more. As a result, what will happen anytime we try to take a step forward in our spiritual walk? Have you noticed this in your own life? Note: When we come to Christ, we effectively declare war on Satan.

7. One of the reasons the world hates us is because we hold to different moral standards. What can we learn from **1 Pet. 4:3-4**? Have you ever experienced this with family or friends? If you want to be accepted by the world, all you have to do is compromise and be like the world (**vs. 19**). Sadly, many churches today are doing exactly that. We see this in many of the modern worship styles, especially in “*the seeker sensitive*” and “*progressive Christianity*” models. What can we learn from the following Bible verses? (See **Rom. 3:10-11; 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17**) Note: One thing is for sure, if we live radically for Jesus Christ, Satan and the evil world system will hate us like they hated Christ.

8. Have you noticed how bad the world is getting today when it comes to their treatment of born-again Christians? The world wants the church to conform to whatever is politically correct, the church will be persecuted when it does not? At Shoreline we will not conform to the world’s standards, “*The Scriptures and the Scriptures alone are the authority for what we believe.*” Certain chapters of the Bible cannot be preached in some countries in the world today. Why is **Romans chapter 1** quickly becoming the forbidden chapter? (See **Rom. 1:20-27**) How should Christians respond when members of the LGBTQ community attend our churches? Why? Should people who are actively involved in the LGBTQ community be allowed to attend church on a regular basis? Why or why not? Should they be allowed to serve in church leadership? Should somebody involved in an adulterous affair with a member of the opposite sex be allowed to serve in church leadership? Why or why not?

9. Many Christian seminaries, Bible colleges and denominations are trying to blend their teachings with those of the world. How does God feel about this? (See **Jam. 4:4-5**)

10. What truths can be learned from reading **verse 20**? Christians are often surprised when they are called upon to suffer for their faith today. Should they be? What can we learn from the following Bible verses? (See **1 Pet. 1:6-9; 4:12-13**) Is there a purpose in Christian's suffering? If so, what is it?

11. For whose name's sake do many Christians suffer today in Muslim countries (**vs. 21**)? People who persecute followers of Jesus Christ are unbelievers who don't know Jesus, and neither do they know God the Father. Rather than receiving Jesus, they love the darkness more than the light. What is your weak link that draws you back into the ways of the world?

12. Jesus was the promised Messiah, He went to His own people the Jews, yet they rejected Him. What were some of the special privileges given to the Jewish people that no other nation received? What did the Jewish people do when their Messiah finally appeared on the scene?

Part II: The one who hates Jesus also hates God the Father (John 15:23-25)

1. What surprising revelation did Jesus make in **verse 23**? Do you think the Jewish religious establishment realized that they hated Yahweh (or God)? Do you think most unbelievers today realize that they are at war with God? (See **Rom. 8:6-8**)

2. Jesus had performed works that no other person in history had ever performed, yet the Jewish people (most of them) refused to believe that He was the Messiah! What can we learn about their spiritual blindness from: **2 Cor. 4:3-4** and **Eph. 2:1-5**?

3. It is one thing to go after someone you don't agree with, but it is quite another thing to trample the name of the holy Son of God underfoot. Jesus is the only way to salvation. (See **John 14:6; Acts 4:12**) What warning do we receive in **Heb. 10:29-31**?

4. In **verse 25**, Jesus quoted from **Psalm 35:19** and **Psalm 69:4**. What is the major theme in all three verses? Why could Jesus legitimately say, *"They hated Me without a cause?"* Can you say the same? Who is the only person who has ever lived a sinless life on planet earth?

5. Just because someone claims to be a believer doesn't mean that they are, we need to listen to what they are saying and look at the way they are living their lives. How did Jesus address the fake Jewish religious leaders in **John 8:44**?

Part III: The coming of the Holy Spirit and the role of the disciples in witnessing (John 15:26-27)

1. What is the meaning of the Greek word, *"Paraclete?"* (Hint: Search Online) Who is the original *"Paraclete?"* Who does the Bible call, *"another Paraclete?"* Jesus concludes this teaching on the hate His disciples would face by reminding them that the Father would not leave them to face it alone, He would send the Counselor (or Helper), the Holy Spirit to help! What name is given to the Holy Spirit in **verse 26**? According to **verse 26b**, who would the testimony of the Holy Spirit be about?

2. What are the disciples of Jesus called to do in **verse 27**? What is the Greek word for *"witness?"* (Hint: Search Online) What English word does the Greek word sound like? How did the remaining 11 disciples of Jesus die? (Hint: Search Online) Are you willing to take a stand for Jesus, even if it costs you the respect of your family and friends? Are you willing to die as a Christian if necessary?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- If the world hates Christians, it is because they hated Jesus first.
- The disciples of Jesus had been chosen by Christ out of the world to be His witnesses.
- The Greek word for *"witness"* in **verse 27** is *"martyreo,"* which sounds like *"martyr."*
- Throughout history, many Christian witnesses have been martyred for their faith in Jesus and for their Christian testimony.
- When unbelievers hate Jesus, it reveals they also hate God the Father who sent Him.
- The Jews hated Jesus without cause, He is the only person who never sinned.
- The Holy Spirit is *"the Spirit of truth;"* His role is to testify about the truth of Jesus.
- The role of the disciple of Jesus Christ is to bear witness of who Jesus is and to give testimony of what Jesus has done.