



## Sermon Reflection Guide; John 15:17-25

1. In verse 18 Jesus tells us that the world will hate us. What is Jesus referring to when he says, “the world”. Who is he specifically saying will hate Jesus and his followers? In what ways have you observed this hatred?
2. In verse 19 Jesus begins to tell us why the world hates us. He says, first, the world hates us because we are not of the world. What does it mean to be “of the world”? Read Luke 6:26, how should this help us to think about what it means to be of the world?
3. Second and third, Jesus says the world will hate us because it hated him and we are his servants, and because we bear the name of Christ. What does it look like to be a servant of Christ in the world and to bear his name? Why would this cause hatred from the world?
4. Fourth and fifth, Jesus says the world will hate us because the Gospel reveals guilt and the Bible condemns the world. In what ways does the Gospel reveal our guilt and sin? What does this mean for how we share the Gospel?
5. In verse 25, Jesus says the world hates him without a cause. What does this teach us about how we should respond to the hatred of the world?

### Sermon Summary

In verse 17 Jesus says, “<sup>17</sup>These things I command you, so that you will love one another.” “These things”, that Jesus is referring to is all that he has said before in the upper room *and* the very difficult things he is about to say to his disciples. In very clear terms Jesus is about to tell his disciples about the reality of the world’s hatred, the reasons for the world’s hatred and the Gospel response to the world’s hatred.

In verse 18 Jesus says, “<sup>18</sup> ‘If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.’” This verse is difficult not because we do not understand what it says but precisely because we do! Jesus says, ‘the reality is that the world will hate you, Christians’. Although Jesus says “*If* the world hates you” he is by no means expressing uncertainty about whether or not the world will hate

Christians. Rather Jesus is guarantying the reality of the world's hatred and comforts us by reminding us this is not unusual, and the world also hated himself. When Jesus uses the word, *world* he is referring not to physical creation but rather to unbelieving mankind that is in opposition and rebellion to God's word. Jesus tells his disciples this because, this is the reality of things and he does not want his disciples to be unprepared for the hatred of the world. The apostle John writes in 1 John 3:13, "<sup>13</sup> Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you."

Further, Jesus tells us exactly why the world hated Jesus and will hate us. The first reason that Jesus gives is because we are not of the world, verse 19, "<sup>19</sup> If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own;" The world hates us because we do not agree with it and we stand with Christ, rather than with them in opposition to him. Because we belong to Jesus we too will be hated.

Second, Jesus says the world hates us because we are following in the footsteps of Jesus, verse 20, "<sup>20</sup> 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." Jesus lived a perfectly moral and righteous life, he gave of himself, healing others and doing good everywhere he went, and the world responded by sentencing him to a horrific death. As Christ's followers, who are imperfect in our obedience, we should not expect the world to treat us any differently.

Third, Jesus says the world hates us because we bear the name of Christ. Verse 21, "<sup>21</sup> But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me." Jesus says that when the world hates us it is because we bear the name of Christ. To those in rebellion and remaining in unbelief, Christ's name cannot be tolerated, and neither can those who bear his name.

Fourth, Jesus says the world hates us because the gospel exposes man's guilt. Verse 22, "<sup>22</sup> 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 world will hate us because we represent God's law which is a mirror to all mankind revealing our sin and guilt before God. Sharing the Gospel is naturally offensive because of this. It is simply not possible to share the Gospel with someone without offending them. Now we should be sure to remove all extraneous offense from our Gospel presentation but the Gospel itself is offensive to the unbelieving world.

Fifth, Jesus says the world hates us because the Bible condemns the world, verse 25, "<sup>25</sup> But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.'" Jesus is very clear that the world hates him without a cause, but he says they hate him because of what "the Law" reveals about them. Jesus says, "their Law" pointing out that many who hate Jesus claim to love God's law, but the irony is that it is that very law which they claim as their own which condemns them.

Finally, how should we respond to this hatred? Simply put we should respond as Jesus does, in love and truth. Jesus says that the world hates him without a cause, we too should seek to live in such a way that the world has no legitimate cause to hate us. We can never compromise the truth of God's word, but we can and must love all mankind the way the Bible calls us to. This task is a difficult one and Jesus says that he tells us all these things so that we may be all the more equipped to love one another.