

Sermon #104 — John's Gospel

Title: **“THEY HATED
ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.”**

Text: John 15:22-25

Date: Sunday Morning — December 19, 2010

Tape: *John #104*

Subject: *Man's Hatred for the Lord Jesus*

Readings: *Psalm 35:1-28 and 69:1-36*

Introduction:

I want your complete attention. I want you to hear what I am about to say. Are you listening? — **The hottest place of hell's everlasting torment is reserved for you who hear but refuse to believe the gospel!** Oh, what a dangerous thing it is for you to be raised in this place, in this congregation, under the faithful preaching of the gospel of God's free and sovereign grace in Christ! If you stop your ears, shut your eyes, harden your heart and run madly to hell shoving God out of your way, the hottest place in hell shall be yours forever! If the gospel you hear from this pulpit does not lift you to the highest heaven (I promise you.), it will sink you into the lowest hell! It will be to you either that by which the Lord God gives you life everlasting in Christ, or that by which the God of Glory damns

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you forever. If you go to hell with the gospel of Christ ringing in your ears, it would be better for you never to have been born!

Do I have your attention? I hope so. Open your Bible to the 15th chapter of John’s Gospel. We will begin reading at verse 22. Oh, may God the Holy Spirit give you ears to hear, eyes to see, and a heart to believe the gospel, for Christ sake! It is my heart’s desire and prayer to God for you that you might be saved today. — O Holy Spirit of God, come down. Visit us in grace and power today! Awaken poor, lost, helpless, dead sinners by your omnipotent mercy! Give them life and faith and salvation in Christ Jesus!

JOHN 15:22

(John 15:22) “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.”

The sin our Lord speaks of here is the sin of Israel and the religious Jews in rejecting him, God’s

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Messiah, the One sent to them (Acts 3:25-26; John 1:11). **If he had not come in his incarnation, in fulfillment of all their law and prophets, and with undeniable proof of his person, they would not be under such strong judgment for their particular sin; but he has come and they have no excuse and God has cast them off** (Isaiah 53:1-3; Romans 11:7-10). — In a word, it is every person’s responsibility to walk in the light God gives him. Our Savior is here telling us that those who have greater light and refuse to walk in the light God gives them shall have greater condemnation. If God cast off the whole nation of Israel because they refused to bow to his Son, you can be certain he will cast you off!

(Proverbs 29:1) “He, that being often reprov’d hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.”

(Proverbs 1:22-33) “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? 23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words

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unto you. 24 Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; 25 But **ye have set at nought all my counsel**, and **would none of my reproof**: 26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; 27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. 28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: 29 **For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD**: 30 **They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof**. 31 **Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices**. 32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. 33 **But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.**”

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(John 15:23) “He that hateth me hateth my Father also.”

Many pretend to know, love, and worship God while rejecting and despising the Lord Jesus Christ. That is not so! **All who hate Christ hate God who sent him. God the Father and God the Son are One** (John 10:30, 5:23). The hatred of the world is toward the Father, the Son, and all who love him.

(John 15:24) “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.”

By his works, as well as by his words, his gospel, the Lord Jesus was evidently set forth before that generation as the Christ of God. Yet, they despised him. They are, therefore, without excuse. — Did you hear that? **Has the Lord Jesus Christ been evidently set before you?** Has he made it clear to you that he is the Christ of God, the Lamb of God, the Savior of the world? Are those facts indisputably,

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irrefutably clear to you? If they are, your unbelief is inexcusable!

JOHN 15:25

We see man’s sin everywhere. It is in our newspapers and on television every day. — Murder. — Rape. — Incest. — Sodomy. — Adultery. — Pedophilia. — Terrorism. All these evils we look at with utter disgust, crying out for law and justice. But, if you want to see the evil of depraved humanity most fully, you will find it plainly set before you in verse 25.

(John 15:25) “But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.”

When we think about the sin of our fallen race, we ought always to think of it in terms of deicide. Here is the essence of sin. It is the murder of God! Man, because of his hatred for his Creator, nailed the Son of God to a cross and threw a hellish party as they watched him die! That is the master crime of hell-bent humanity, the pinnacle of man’s guilt.

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Sin out did itself when it slew the Lord of glory, who came on earth to die in the place of fallen men. Never does sin appear so exceedingly sinful as when we see it nailing the Lamb of God to the cursed tree, whom it hated without a cause!

Here, in verse 25, the Son of God says, — *“But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.”* There are several things here that deserve far more attention than I will give them today. But I do want to see them clearly. — **SEVEN THINGS**

MOST HATED

1. **First, let me remind you that there has never been a man so hated as the God-man, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Our Lord Jesus here refers us to two verses in the Psalms (Psalms 35:19; 69:4), affirming plainly that the Psalms, though written by men from their own experiences, were written by divine inspiration as prophecies of our Savior. Let’s read those passages.

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(Psalm 35:19) “Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: *neither* let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.”

(Psalm 69:1-4) “Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto *my* soul. (2) I sink in deep mire, where *there is* no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. (3) I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. (4) They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away.”

From the time that he entered into this world, until the hour that he was hanged upon the tree, the Son of God was the constant, unceasing object of man’s cruel hatred.

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- Note that word **“They.”** It refers to all who refused to believe our Savior. Though they had no reason to do so, they hated him.

No human being was ever so lovely as our Savior. It would seem almost impossible not to love him. Yet, lovely, loving, and loveable as he was, — **“Yea, he is altogether lovely!”** — no creature ever endured such a relentless hatred.

As soon as he was born, Herod sought to kill him. And that was just the beginning. All the days of his life, he was **“despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”**

Man’s hatred for the Savior displayed itself in different ways. Sometimes it was in overt deeds, as when they took him to the brow of the hill, and would have cast him down headlong, or when they took up stones again to stone him, because he declared that he is God.

At other times the hatred showed itself in words of slander. — **“He is a drunken man and a wine-**

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“bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.”
Sometimes it was manifest in looks of contempt, as when they looked suspiciously at him, because he ate with publicans and sinners, and sat down to eat with unwashed hands. At other times the hatred was silent, entirely in their thoughts, as when they thought within themselves, **“This man blasphemeth,”** because he said to the woman taken in adultery, **“thy sins be forgiven thee.”**

But the hatred was always there. **Even when they tried to make him their king,** it was not because they loved him, or even admired him. It was because they thought they could use him for their own advantage, nothing more. Remember, it was the same men who tried to make him their king who, just a little while later cried, **“Crucify him, crucify him!”**

“They” who hated him were all men, in every rank and quarter of society. — The Rich and the Poor — The Men and the Women — The Old and the Young — The Pharisees and the Sadducees — The Governor and the Slave — The Learned and the Ignorant — The Powerful and the Powerless — The

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Prince and the Pauper!

Here was a man who walked among men, who loved men, who spoke to rich and poor as though they were (as indeed they are) on one level in his sight. Yet, all conspired against him in unified hatred. They admired his eloquence, and frequently would have fallen prostrate in worship before him, on account of the wondrous deeds he did. Yet, they all conspired together to put him to death, nailing him to the tree, wagging their heads, taunting him, jeering at him, mocking him, spitting in his face, jerking out his beard, beating him, and laughing at him as if they were being entertained by a comedian!

- *“He saved others. Himself he cannot save.”*
- *“Come down from the cross and save thyself, thou that buildest the temple in three days!”*
- *“Wait, let’s see if God will have him!”*

NO REASON

2. Anyone who bothers to read history, let alone the Word of God, knows that the Lord Jesus was the object of man’s cruel hatred. **But why did they**

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hate him? They had no reason. Yet, three times we read, “**They hated me without a cause.**”

There is nothing that can be, or ever has been, pointed to in the life of our Redeemer that was even objectionable, let alone a cause for hatred.

- Our Lord Jesus was perfect in his character.
- In his conduct, he was without flaw.
- His doctrine was pure and good. — The law of God he upheld, obeyed, and exemplified is, in the opinion of all sane men, good. — The doctrine he taught pure doctrine.
- All his works were works of mercy.
- His kindness, sympathy, and tenderness was obvious to all.

Yet, though there was no cause for it, the Lord of Glory was hated of all men in this world, and still is.

ENMITY AGAINST GOD

3. **Third, the cause of man’s hatred for Christ was and is altogether in himself.** Here is the cause of man’s hatred for Christ...

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(Romans 8:7-8) “Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (8) So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

Men hated him without a cause, because they hate God who sent him, and everything about the Lord Jesus stirred man’s hatred for God against him. **They hated him because of the gospel he preached.** Their hatred of him was and is drawn forth and made manifest by the fact that...

- **He declared himself to be God, one with the Father and equal to the Father** (John 10:25-33).

(John 10:25-33) “Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. (26) But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. (27) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (28) And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. (29) My Father, which

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gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father’s hand. (30) I and *my* Father are one. (31) Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. (32) Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? (33) The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”

- **He exposed the evil of their hearts and the hypocrisy of their religion** (Mark 7:20-23; Luke 16:15; John 8:40).

(Mark 7:20-23) “And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. (21) For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, (22) Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: (23) All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”

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(Luke 16:15) “And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”

(John 8:40) “But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.”

- **He openly proclaimed God’s sovereignty in the exercise of his mercy and grace** (Luke 4:25-32).

(Luke 4:25-32) “But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; (26) But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow. (27) And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. (28) And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with

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wrath, (29) And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. (30) But he passing through the midst of them went his way, (31) And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. (32) And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.”

- **He preached redemption, righteousness, and salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in him alone** (John 6:37-40, 44-45, 47-51, 53, 61-65).

(John 6:37-40) “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (38) For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. (39) And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (40) And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on

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him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

(John 6:44-45) “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”

(John 6:47-51) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. (48) I am that bread of life. (49) Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. (50) This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. (51) I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

(John 6:53) “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of

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the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.”

(John 6:61-65) “When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? (62) *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? (63) It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life. (64) But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. (65) And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”

- **They hated him because he forgave sinners of their sins freely and fully, while refusing to accept and honor their works of righteousness.**
— (The Woman Taken in Adultery — The Gadarene).

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For all these things they hated him. Yet, had they believed him, the gospel he preached would have saved them (Matthew 11:25-30).

(Matthew 11:25-30) “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (26) Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. (27) All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*. (28) Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

BY DIVINE PURPOSE

4. **Fourth, I want you to see that all this was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, according**

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to our God’s sovereign, eternal purpose of grace toward us.

(John 15:25) “But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.”

The hatred of men for Christ resulted in him being crucified upon the cursed tree as our Substitute (Acts 2:23, 36; Acts 4:27-28).

(Acts 2:23) “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”

(Acts 2:36) “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

(Acts 4:27-28) “For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and

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the people of Israel, were gathered together, (28)
For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel
determined before to be done.”

By this means, by his sin-atonement death as our Substitute, the Lord Jesus declares, “Then I restored that which I took not away!”

(Psalms 69:4) “They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.”

Yet, the guilt rests on men, for they did what they wanted to do. Nothing in him gave them cause for this hatred. The evil was altogether in them. Be sure you understand this. — Wicked men are responsible for all the havoc they attempt to wreak upon the kingdom of God, and shall be judged accordingly; but let us never imagine that they have the power to accomplish their evil designs. — It is written, **“Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and**

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shall be quiet from fear of evil...Jerusalem shall dwell safely” (Proverbs 1:33; Jeremiah 23:6).

FREELY SAVED

5. **Fifth, the Lord Jesus Christ, our God and Savior is hated by men without a cause, and that is exactly how he saves sinful men and women who hate him — “without a cause” — “freely”.**

(Hosea 14:4) “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.”

(Romans 3:19-24) “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. (20) Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. (21) But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the

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prophets; (22) Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: (23) For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (24) Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

(Romans 8:32) “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

(Revelation 21:16) “And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.”

(Revelation 22:17) “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

A QUESTION

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6. Now, I have a question for you. — **Do you hate him, or do you love him?**

Let me speak frankly to you, and tell you what the Word of God plainly declares. — **If you refuse to trust him, if you refuse to bow to him and believe him, your unbelief reveals your hatred for the Son of God** (1 John 5:10).

(1 John 5:10) “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.”

If you trust him, your faith in him causes you to love him. — *“Unto you, therefore, which believe, he is precious.”* — *“Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.”*

“Do not I love Thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each odious idol out,

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That dares to rival Thee.

Do not I love Thee, O my Lord?

Then let me nothing love;

Dead be my heart to every joy,

When Jesus cannot move.

Is not Thy Name melodious still

To mine attentive ear?

Doth not each pulse with pleasure bound

My Savior’s voice to hear?

Hast Thou a lamb in all Thy flock

I would disdain to feed?

Hast Thou a foe, before whose face

I fear Thy cause to plead?

Would not mine ardent spirit vie

With angels round the throne,

To execute Thy sacred will,

And make Thy glory known?

Would not my heart pour forth its blood

In honor of Thy Name?

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And challenge the cold hand of death
To damp th’ immortal flame?

Thou knowest I love Thee, dearest Lord,
But O, I long to soar
Far from the sphere of mortal joys,
And learn to love Thee more!”

Philip Doddridge

(1 John 4:19) “We love him, because he first loved us.”

Believing him, trusting him, loving him, I am confident that he loves me even as he is loved by his Father, with an everlasting love. And his love for me casts out all fear!

BE RECONCILED

7. I’ve come here today to persuade you to be reconciled to God, to persuade you to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Isaiah 1:18) “Come now, and let us reason

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together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

(Isaiah 55:1) “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

(Isaiah 55:3) “Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”

(Isaiah 55:6-7) “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:
7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you

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rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light.”

(2 Corinthians 5:10-11) “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”

(2 Corinthians 5:17-19) “Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

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(2 Corinthians 5:20-21) “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

(2 Corinthians 6:1-2) “We then, [as] workers together [with him], beseech [you] also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. 2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation.)”

Amen.