

Lighthouse Bible Church

June 22nd, 2014

John 15: 18 – 25 *Scripture Reading: Revelation 2: 8 - 11*

Why the World hates the Friends of Jesus #1

Stand – Read – Pray

Jesus has just finished telling His disciples, and us, how to be a true friend of His and how to know He is our friend. He said a true friend of Jesus loves other believers with a sacrificial selfless love that would be willing to give their own life, if necessary, for that person, just like Christ did for us.

A friend of Jesus knows God's revealed truth and obeys His commands. A friend of Jesus knows that they were chosen by Christ to be His friend. A friend of Jesus bears fruit and their fruit remains and impacts others for all eternity, and a friend of Jesus experiences answered prayer.

And now Jesus is about to say; that when your life reflects the friendship and abiding love of Christ and love for one another that brings true joy and blessing, just know that you will find yourself, when you live like that, being hated by the world.

Jesus says 'when you are friends of mine and you live and talk like it, you will be living in the middle of a hostile, God and Christ hating world that will hate you as well, especially when you try to tell them about this Jesus who saved you and whom you are following and the One you are friends with and the One they need, to be saved from their sin.

Jesus will say to them that they will come after you like they came after Me; with all the hatred, jealousy, vengeance, and cruelty they could muster.

In **Acts 1: 8** it says **you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you shall be WITNESSES to Me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the end of the earth.** That word witness is *martoos* in the Greek and it is where we get our word martyr from; it came to be identified with someone who is willing to die or is killed for Jesus.

It is the same word used in **Hebrews 12: 1** where it says **seeing we are compassed about with such a great cloud of WITNESSES** (*martoos*). Those are the same martyrs listed earlier in **Hebrews 11: 35 - 38**

But that is the cost of following Christ and obeying Christ and living like Christ and being a friend of Christ; and it is a cost worth enduring in comparison to the glory that awaits us. Do you remember what Jesus said in **Luke 9: 23**? He said **If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me, for whoever desires to save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.** He said later in **Luke 14: 26 – 27** **if anyone comes to Me and does not hate ... his own life cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.**

That is why Jesus says in Verse 17 of Chapter 15; ‘keep on loving one another’ because that will be the only love you will know in the midst of a Christ hating, Christian hating world’. In other words, we need each other more and more as we see the day approaching.

Hebrews 10: 24 – 25 says **let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.** And as that day approaches, the hostility and hatred of Christ and Christian will increase.

And that leads us to our passage starting in Verse 18 where Jesus begins to tell them why the world hates those who are friends of His.

Verse 18: if the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you.

Jesus says ‘one reason that the world will hate you is because it hated Me and if you **look** and **act** and **sound** like Me, it will hate you too’. He is going to tell them in Chapter 16: 2 that **the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.** It will happen up to and during the time of the tribulation period in the future where Jesus told them in **Matthew 24: 9 they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you and you will be hated by all nations for My names sake.**

You see, that is exactly what they did with Jesus. They hated Him and so they will kill you for His names sake, just like they killed Him. The unbelieving world of Jesus day hated Him, and it is no different today. Jesus said in **Verse 25 that they hated Me without a reason, without a cause,** just like they do His followers; and they did hate Jesus didn't they?

Matthew 12: 14 and Mark 3: 6 and Luke 6: 11 after Jesus had healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day, it says **the Pharisees and the Herodians were filled with rage and plotted against Him how they might destroy Him.**

When Jesus healed the man who had been lame for 38 years it says in **John 5: 16 for this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him...**Jesus even asked them in **John 7: 19 why do you seek to kill Me?** And some of the people later in **John 7: 25 said is this not He whom they seek to kill?** Yes it was and the reason was;

Because He was living by God's standard and not the religious leaders standards or the worlds standards. Jesus says 'if the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you'. Then Jesus tells them another reason why the world will hate them in Verse 19

Verse 19: if you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Jesus says 'the reason the world hates you is because you are not of this world, you are different. And by the way, the word **world**, used 5 times in this one verse there, is *kosmos* in the Greek and in this context means the evil world system, the depravity of mankind, the pervasive influence of evil worldwide in society, philosophy, government, and religious beliefs which is ultimately influenced by Satan and his angels. It is an evil system of people who have set themselves against God and Christ and every born again believer who follows Christ, who loves Christ, who proclaims Christ, and openly demonstrates that by what they say and how they live. That is the world that He is talking about here.

And by the way, that is the world that is currently being ruled by Satan, right? Satan is called **the ruler of this world** in **John 12: 31** and **John 14: 30**. In **1st John 5: 19** it says **the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one**. That is the evil world system ruled by Satan that He is talking about here.

And because it is ruled and influenced by Satan, it is a world system that hates God and Christ and Christians and will do whatever it can to remove or destroy it and them any way possible.

You say 'well, I don't think I am hated by the world'. Well, there are two possibilities: either you are not a Christian and part of the world while living as a religious hypocrite or you are a Christian but it is not obvious to anyone;

whether because of personal isolation or never living or sharing your faith publically.

But by virtue of living your Christian life in what you say and what you do, you become a rebuke to the sinful world around you and they don't like that. Remember Cain and Able In **Genesis 4: 1 – 8**? Read **1st John 3: 10 - 12** says **not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother and why did he murder his brother? Because his works were evil and his brothers righteous.** He couldn't stand the fact that his brother was righteous and he was not.

In **John 3: 19** it says **and this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the light...**

In **Ephesians 5: 11** it says **and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather expose and reprove them.**

I like what Jesus will say later in **John 17: 14** **I have given them Your word and the world has hated them because they are not of the world just as I am not of the world.**

Jesus said 'the same world system that hated Me and would kill Me is the same one that hates you and wants to kill you too'. And the reason they hated Jesus and crucified Him is because He violated their world system; and what kind of system was it? A religious one.

You see, false religion, cults, religious people living in a deceptive religious systems, under the guise of godliness that call themselves Christians, are the greatest haters and threats to true Christianity and to true believers. When

you start messing with their false religious system, you are hitting at their heart and they don't like that.

Jesus also said **if you were of the world, the world would love its own**, it would love you. It would love your sin and evil and darkness and immorality and drunkenness and violence and strife and deceit and unforgiveness and all of those other sins mentioned in **Romans 1: 28 – 31** and then in **Romans 1: 32** it says **who, knowing the righteous judgment of God that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.** And Paul said in **2nd Timothy 3: 5** that **they have a form of godliness but deny its power.** You see, they want to keep their sin and yet still be religious too.

But the world doesn't love us, it hates us, because **we are not of this world**, we are an indictment against this world and its imorality and evil and sinfulness and when we preach about their sin and God's judgment, they hate us all the more.

That is why you don't see a whole lot of unbelievers clamoring to get in here; they don't want to hear how bad they are, they want to hear how good they are and how religious they are. And there are some churches that will do that.

So we have to go out and, in love and humility, share the gospel with them. and if they do come in here we want to show them the love of Christ and be gracious to them, yet we won't shrink back from telling them the truth about their sinful condition, because we love them enough to tell them that.

Jesus finishes Verse 19 by saying **but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.** We are hated by the world because Jesus

chose us out of the world. In the original Greek construction of this sentence it would read this way ‘but I chose you out of the world for Myself’.

Jesus sovereignly chose us to no longer live by the world’s evil system but to live for Him. Remember **John 6: 44, 65 no one can come to Jesus unless the Father grants it and draws Him to Jesus.**

And once we are chosen out of the world at salvation, we become a new creation in Christ and we begin to live like a new creation. Old things are passed away, all things become new like **2nd Corinthians 5: 17.** And because we are no longer, by our **words** and **actions**, following the world, then the world and its world leader, Satan, hates us.

That is why **1st Peter 5: 8** says **the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.** And why we are told in **Ephesians 6: 10 – 11** to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Then Jesus says in Verse 20

Verse 20: Remember the word that I said to you ‘a servant is not greater than his master’ if they persecute Me, they will also persecute you.

He said that back in **John 13: 16** when He was talking with His disciples about humility and serving when He just finished washing their feet. He says ‘**if I washed your feet you need to wash one another’s feet as well. In other words, what I do, I want you to do.**

Now He is saying it in the context of persecution. He says ‘if I am persecuted, which I have been and will be to the point of death, and if they do it to your Master, then **they will also persecute you** as well. And they did, and they did it to the point of death as well.

In **Acts 12: 1 – 3** it says that **Herod killed James, the brother of John**, and get this, it goes on to say **that it pleased the Jews**, so then he went after Peter but it wasn't Peter's time yet.

His time would come later when He is also crucified in front of his wife and was crucified upside down. Paul wrote to Timothy from a Roman prison in **2nd Timothy 4: 6** said **my departure is at hand** and he would soon die at the hands of Nero.

The Apostle John, **Revelation 1: 9** says was banished to the island of Patmos **for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ**. In **Matthew 24: 9** it says **then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake..** Jesus says 'if they persecute Me, they will persecute you too'.

It was equally difficult when during the time of the Roman empire, once a year every person had to burn some incense to the godhead of Caesar and then should 'Caesar is Lord'. And of course the true Christians wouldn't do that and they were persecuted for that.

On the other spectrum you have the apostle Paul, a Jew of the nation of Israel, before His conversion persecuting and jailing and killing Christians, thinking he was zealously serving God. **Acts 22: 3 – 4** says **I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers law and was zealous toward God as you all are today. I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women...**

Then after his conversion and public proclamation of the gospel, he said in **Galatians 6: 17** that **I bear about in my body the marks of the Lord**

Jesus. So Jesus says ‘don’t be surprised if you suffer, I did and the servant isn’t greater than His lord.

Jesus says, ‘not only if they persecute Me they will persecute you but, **if they kept My word they will keep yours also.** *Possibly both a + and - sense*
There are those who will hear the word of God that you share and they will **keep** it. *tereo* = to guard, to hold fast to, but the majority will not. It is like what Jesus said in **Matthew 7: 13 – 14 enter in by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the path that leads to destruction and there are MANY who go in by it, because narrow is the gate and narrow or difficult is the way which leads to life and there are FEW who find it.**

Remember the parable that Jesus gave in **Matthew 7: 24 – 27 therefore, whoever hears these saying of Mine and does them I will liken to a wise man who built his house on the rock...but everyone who hears these saying of Mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.**

Closing prayer and gospel