

John 15:18-16:4, "The world will hate you."

There is hate in our world:

- The beheading of aid workers. (ISIS)
- Bullying in our schools. (Hazing of football players in NJ)
- Violence and misunderstand in urban areas. (Ferguson, MO)
- Domestic violence against women and children. (NFL)

Today I want to talk about hate, and its remedy. In the next 30 minutes we'll have solved the problem ... right? Wrong. I'm afraid hate is going to remain with us for a while. But, you are not powerless against it, and you, and I, each of us, has a part in dealing with the hatred we experience or see in the world.

In today's Bible passage Jesus is bracing His followers for the hate they will personally face. Jesus teaches us the reason for hate in our world, the solution to hate, and how we can personally resist hate.

A. The reason for hate.

John 15:18-19, "If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. ¹⁹The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.

- Does someone hate you? You might think "it's my fault" or "what is wrong with them?" Jesus reminds us that hate is very old. People first hated Him.
- Hate is directed to those aren't a part of "my" group. When someone perceives that you are not "with them" then they revert to base gang-mentality, and they hate you.

- Think of all the "groups" you belong to. For example, I am in all of these groups:
 - Caucasian. Christian
 - Hokie Fan. Baptist
 - Gator Fan. Conservative
 - Left-handed. Obese-American
 - "Wilder." Amazon Prime Member
 - "Shotwell" by marriage. Rotary Club Member
 - Heterosexual. Bridge player

The Universe of people who aren't in all of my groups is in the Billions. In fact, I'm pretty sure only 1 person in the entire world fits in all of these groups ... so I have a bunch of people I *could* hate, don't I? So why don't I hate people ... because of a key group mentioned in verse 19, I am in this group:

- "Chosen to come out of the world." Hate is from the world. When Jesus snatches you out of the world, He disconnects you from giving hate ... giving hate to others is a sign that you're not yet out of the world.

John 15:20-21, Do you remember what I told you? 'A slave is not greater than the master.' Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you. ²¹ They will do all this to you because of me, for they have rejected the One who sent me.

-- The "other side" of being friends with God is that people who hate Him will hate you too. When people reject God they also, naturally, reject His people. The "why" someone seems to have no reason at all to hate you, you try to be nice to them to no avail, could well be that they are fundamentally opposed to God, and also to you.

John 15:22-23, They would not be guilty if I had not come and spoken to them. But now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ Anyone who hates me also hates my Father.

-- People are guilty without excuse for their sin. You are responsible for your sin, and not for the sin of others. The people who behead an aid worker for the supposed sins of their government are, of course, mentally deranged lunatics. We are responsible to answer for our own sin. We are not appointed to judge the sin of others.

John 15:24, If I hadn't done such miraculous signs among them that no one else could do, they would not be guilty. But as it is, they have seen everything I did, yet they still hate me and my Father. ²⁵ This fulfills what is written in their Scriptures: 'They hated me without cause.'

-- It is truly inexplicable that people hate Jesus. They see all that He is and did, and still hate Him. It is, as Psalm 69:4 says, "without cause."

B. The solution to hate.

John 15:26-27, “But I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me. ²⁷ And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry.

-- The solution to Hate? The truth.

-- I must testify to the Truth if I’m going to be a part of the solution.

-- It has been said, “The Only Thing Necessary for the Triumph of Evil is that Good Men Do Nothing.” The opposing force to evil and hate is the truth told under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. You may wish to lash out at hate ... instead, ask the Holy Spirit to guide your voice along the path of truth.

C. How to resist hate.

John 16:1, “I have told you these things so that you won’t abandon your faith.”

-- Hate is resisted by a dogged devotion to faith in Jesus Christ.

-- Hate is contagious! Think of hate as spiritual-Ebola.

-- Be *prepared* for hate tomorrow by building a strong faith today.

John 16:2, For you will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are doing a holy service for God.

-- Sometimes, hate wins. It’s disturbing to see images of hate cloaked in the language of Holy service to God. It’s disturbing, but should not be surprising based on these words of Christ.

John 15:3-4, This is because they have never known the Father or me. ⁴ Yes, I’m telling you these things now, so that when they happen, you will remember my warning. I didn’t tell you earlier because I was going to be with you for a while longer.

-- When the next news story comes out featuring hate, remember the words of Jesus, “expect hate, and let it prompt you to a deeper faith.”

A closing prayer ... “Dear God, help us all call upon the Truth when we see hate. May Your Spirit help us testify to Truth and to bathe our words with love and mercy. When we are troubled by the day’s news, grow our faith in response. In Jesus’ name, amen.”