

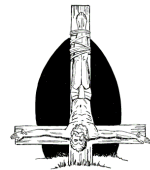


# Life in this World

John 15:18-16:15

## *Christ Hated → Christians Hated*

- ❑ After telling his disciples to “love each other” (15:17), Jesus tells them they will be hated by “the world.”<sup>1</sup> Read John 15:18-21.
  1. Christ and his disciples were obviously hated by “the world” in the first century. Do you think “the world” has hated Christ and his followers throughout history, including today? If so, *why* do you think the world hates Christ and his followers?
  2. If you are a Christian, how do you feel about being hated (or disliked, ridiculed, or mistreated) *because* you are a believer? How does it affect your thinking and actions?<sup>2</sup>
- ❑ Jesus says, since the world hated and mistreated him, the world will also hate and mistreat his followers “because of [his] name” (15:21).<sup>3</sup> Jesus’ followers will be opposed because they are going against the flow of the world.<sup>4</sup>



## *God Revealed → Guilt Revealed*

- ❑ Read John 15:22-25. Rejection of Jesus’ words (15:22) and works (15:24a) is rejection of God himself. To hate Jesus is to hate God (15:23, 24b). To reject Jesus is to reject God. To reject God is the greatest sin.<sup>5</sup>

## *Spirit Testifies → Disciples Testify*

- ❑ Read John 15:26-27. The “Advocate”<sup>6</sup> is the Holy Spirit – “the Spirit of truth” (15:26).
  3. What must Jesus’ disciples do? (15:27) How does their activity relate to the Spirit’s activity? How does this apply to believers today?<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this context, ‘the world’ (*kosmos*) refers to the created moral order that has rebelled against God. ‘The world’ has beliefs, values, morals, attitudes and behaviors that are opposed to God. It dishonors God and rejects His rule.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, very few people like to be hated. In general, Christians should not intentionally provoke the hatred of others. The Bible says, ‘If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone’ (Romans 12:18). However, Christians should stand firm for Jesus, and for what is true and right, even though others may not like it. We should be God-pleasers more than people-pleasers. Of course, God’s love should motivate and constrain us.

<sup>3</sup> ‘because of my name’ = ‘because of me.’ Jesus says that people hate him and his disciples because ‘they do not know the one who sent me’ (15:21b). If they truly knew God, they would accept God’s revelation in Jesus (14:7).

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes ‘Christians’ are hated because of bad behavior (e.g., hypocrisy, self-righteousness), but more often Christians are hated because of their beliefs, practices and moral standards. By definition, ‘the world’ is opposed to God. Thus, when people are united with God through faith in Christ, ‘the world’ is also opposed to them.

<sup>5</sup> ‘they would not be guilty of sin’ (15:22, 24) does not mean they would have been totally sinless if Jesus had not appeared to them. Every human is guilty of sin (Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-12, 23). However, rejection of Jesus Christ is ‘the rejection of the clearest light, the fullest revelation; and therefore it incurs the most central, deep-stained guilt’ (D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991], 526).

<sup>6</sup> ‘Advocate’ (*paraklētos*) – also translated ‘Helper’ (ESV, NASB), ‘Counselor’ (HCSB).

<sup>7</sup> The disciples must give testimony about Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. This applies primarily to Jesus’ first disciples, who were “with him from the beginning”, but extends to all believers. We also must give testimony.

## Trouble will Come

- ❑ Read [John 16:1-4](#). Jesus warns his disciples about the troubles they will face. After Jesus has gone, his followers will become the targets of the hostility that Jesus has faced. Jesus wants them to be prepared so they “will not fall away.”<sup>8</sup>
  4. What troubles will Jesus’ disciples face?<sup>9</sup> What kinds of mistreatment do Jesus’ followers face today?



## The Spirit will Come

- ❑ Read [John 16:5-15](#). Jesus’ disciples are “filled with grief” because Jesus is going away ([16:5-6](#)).<sup>10</sup> But Jesus says, “Very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away” ([16:6](#)).
  5. Why is it “good” that Jesus is going away?<sup>11</sup>
- ❑ Jesus has already told his disciples that the Spirit would teach them all things, and remind them of everything Jesus had told them ([14:26](#)). The Spirit would also testify about Jesus through the disciples ([15:26-27](#)). What else will the Spirit do?
  - “He will prove the world to be wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment” ([16:8](#)).<sup>12</sup> He will reveal the truth about sin and righteousness and judgment.
  - “He will guide [the disciples] into all the truth” ([16:13](#)).<sup>13</sup>
  - “He will glorify [Christ]” ([16:14](#)).<sup>14</sup> He will bring glory and honor to Jesus Christ.

## The Life & You

- Do you belong to “the world” or to Jesus? If you do not want to claim either category, which one best represents your beliefs and values? Jesus tells his followers, “...you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world” ([15:19](#)). Do you need to follow Jesus?
- As a follower of Jesus, have you experienced hatred, dislike, ridicule or mistreatment from others? How does it affect your faith and your testimony? Read [Matthew 5:10-12](#); [2 Timothy 1:8](#); [1 Peter 2:19-21](#); [4:12-16](#); and [Romans 8:28-39](#). Remember that you are a child of God, Jesus has overcome the world ([John 16:33](#)), and the Spirit lives in you and empowers you.

<sup>8</sup> ‘fall away’ (*skandalisthēte*) – made to stumble or fall away. Mistreatment challenges and tests a person’s faith.

<sup>9</sup> They will be ‘put out of the synagogue’ (*aposynagōgos*). The synagogue was the Jewish house of worship, teaching and prayer. While Christians believe that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures (thus in continuity with true Jewish religion), many first century Jews considered Christianity to be a dangerous teaching that must be defeated. Some Jews resorted to killing Christians as ‘a service to God’ ([16:2](#)). Before Paul became a follower of Jesus, he was convinced that persecuting Christians was the right thing to do ([Philippians 3:4b-6](#); [Acts 8:103](#); [1 Tim. 1:13](#)). Of course, early Christians were also mistreated and killed by others (and they still are).

<sup>10</sup> Scholars address the seeming conflict of [16:5](#) with [13:36](#) in different ways. Some say [16:5](#) means they are not asking him *now* (present tense). Others say their earlier questions were not serious inquiries about actual destination.

<sup>11</sup> In God’s program, Jesus must finish his work before the Spirit is sent, for the Spirit’s indwelling is part of the new order that Jesus is bringing. The gift of the Spirit (God’s special presence and power in us) is so great that Jesus’ departure should be seen as good.

<sup>12</sup> ‘prove’ (*elenchō*) – ‘convict’ (*ESV, NLT*). There are different interpretations of *elenchō* in this context. Some scholars think it means ‘prove’ (*NIV*) or ‘expose,’ with the purpose of showing the world that Jesus was right and they were wrong. Thus the Spirit is like a prosecutor. Others say it means ‘shaming the world and convincing it of its own guilt, thus calling for repentance’ (*Carson, 537*). Both interpretations are consistent with the Spirit’s work.

<sup>13</sup> ‘all the truth’ of God’s revelation and salvation. Like the Son, the Spirit is in perfect unity with the Father, so he speaks God’s words. Verse 13 applies primarily to the disciples, but the Spirit still guides us into God’s truth.

<sup>14</sup> Jesus reveals God the Father. All should honor the Son (Jesus) just as they honor the Father ([John 5:23](#)).