

Why the World Hates Christians
John 15:17-25
Part 3

When Christ was getting ready to leave this world He told His disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled you believe in God believe also in Me. (2) In My Father’s house are many mansions if it were not so I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” Now that I would have to say that that certainly will be a great day!

And what a great promise to dwell on and it is a promise that we should dwell on. It is our blessed hope. And hopefully we will wake up each day and say to our selves, “Perhaps this will be the day!”

But this is not the only thing that Christ promised us. He also promised His disciples that as they went into this world as His ambassadors and as ministers of reconciliation the world will hate them. And has this in fact come true? Absolutely! Over the centuries 10’s of millions of Christians have been martyred for their faith. In fact, it has been estimated than in the last century more Christians were martyred for their faith than had been martyred for their faith in all the centuries prior to that.

So why would they hate His disciples? Why would the world hate us? And especially why would the world hate us for coming to them in obedient to Christ in an attempt to help them?

And this brings us back to the passage that we have been considering for several weeks. This brings us back to **John 15:17-25** where Jesus very clearly lists for us several different reasons why this is so. So far we have covered two of those reasons.

So what was the first reason? The first reason was: The world hates us because we are not of this world (John 15:17-19). We saw this in **John 15:17-19**. So what is this all about? We like the world were the enemies of God and were the participants in an active rebellion against God but when we made peace with God through faith in Christ we were no longer a part of

Valley Bible Church -Sermon Transcript

that rebellion and by definition were therefore no longer a part of this world. So if this was the first reason what was the second reason?

The second reason that we have already considered was this: The world hates us because the world hates Christ (John 15:20). We saw this in **John 15:20**? So what does this have to do with the world hating us? This is very simple. Since the world hates Christ they will hate us because we are in fact His ambassadors and the conduit of His life. So as we go forth into this world as His ambassadors and as the conduit of His life of course the world will hate us. They have to hate us because they hate Christ.

But this is not the end of it. The world hates us not only because we are not a part of it, the world hates us not only because the world hates Christ, but there is a third reason.

And I would hope that as we consider this third reason that we might not only have a greater appreciation of the potential hostility that is in this world toward us as Christians but that we might even in light of this growing appreciation of the world's hostility be that much more determined to be what Christ has called us to be and to do what Christ has called us to do. So what is this third reason for the world's hatred of Christians?

The world hates us because they do not know God (John 15:21-25). There are millions even billions of people ringing gongs and making pilgrimages to various religious sites all over the world, who are in their own unique ways seeking to worship God, but the sad fact is that they do not even know Him and those who do not know Him will ultimately hate those who do if they are put in certain circumstances. How do we know this?

Let me read for you **John 15:21**. **“But all these things [referring to the persecution of Christians] they [in other words, the world] will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.”** So do we see the world's hatred of Christians in this verse? Absolutely! If the world did not hate Christians then the world would not persecute Christians.

So why does the world hate Christians? They hate Christians not only because Christians are not a part of this world, they hate Christians not only because they hate Christ, but also they hate Christians because they do not

Valley Bible Church -Sermon Transcript

know the One who sent Christ. In other words, they do not have a personal relationship with God. Isn't that exactly what **John 15:21** tells us? But why would the world hate us simply because they do not know God? I believe that we can answer this question by asking another question.

Does the world want to hear that they do not know God? Does the world want to hear that they do not have a personal relationship with God? No! Not particularly!

And there is a very good reason why they would not want to hear this. It is destabilizing. If people think everything is good between themselves and God it is like they have this incredible insurance policy that they can always turn to when life gets tough. If however they suddenly realize that they have no such policy then of course all bets are off and they will immediately feel vulnerable and far more insecure, not only in terms of their present but also in terms of their future.

So what does the world not want to hear? They do not want to hear that they do not know God; or in other words, they do not want to hear that they do not have a relationship with God. But even though the people of this world may not want to hear that they do not know God or do not have a relationship with God it is still the truth.

And if we as Christ's ambassadors are committed to declaring this truth what will be the response of this world? They will hate us. They will hate us because they do not want to be told that they do not know God.

So let me ask you this question: When someone does not know God or has no relationship with God whose fault is it? It is their fault! If people do not know God it is because they have chosen, in their unrighteousness, not to see what God has revealed about Himself (Romans 1:18-21). Certainly we see this in respect to creation.

Let me read for you **Romans 1:18-20**. **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, (19) because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. (20) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal**

Valley Bible Church -Sermon Transcript

power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

Has God made Himself known through creation? Absolutely! And how has the world by and large responded to what He has revealed of Himself through His creation? They have chosen to suppress the truth in righteousness. And how have they done this? They have done this, not necessarily by denying the fact that there is a God, although some have in fact done but rather they have done this primarily by not responding appropriately to what God had revealed about Himself in creation.

How do we know this? Let us continue to read **Romans 1** but this time I would like to read for you **Romans 1:21**. What does it say? **“For even though they knew God [in other words, they knew God in terms of His eternal power and divine nature], they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks.”** In other words, in spite of all that He had revealed of Himself through creation, they still wanted to do what they wanted to do, when they wanted to do it, in the way they wanted to do it even though they knew that what they were thinking, feeling and doing might be displeasing to God.

So again let me ask you this question based on what God has revealed about Himself through His creation. Whose fault is it if people do not know God, if they do not have a relationship with God? It is their fault! And therefore when they stand before God in the judgment and are condemned they will not have anyone else to blame but themselves.

God is not hiding Himself from this world? He has been revealing Himself to this world. But the world continues to reject God by suppressing the truth in unrighteousness whether that is by denying the truth that He has revealed about Himself outright or by simply not responding appropriately to the truth that God has revealed about Himself. And this response by the world to what God has revealed about Himself through creation and through other means I believe very graphically demonstrates that fact that they truly do not know Him for if they truly knew Him that would be responding in a different way to the truth that He has revealed to them about Himself.

So let me ask you this question. What is the greatest expression of the world’s rejection of God’s revelation in respect to Himself that could possibly be expressed?

Valley Bible Church - Sermon Transcript

There is no greater expression of the world's rejection of God's revelation in respect to Himself than in their rejection of Christ, the light of the world (John 3:19-20). Let me read for you **John 3:19-20**. **“And this is the judgment, that the light [not a light but the light which of course is referring to Christ] is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. (20) For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.”** When creation and what it reveals about God is compared to Christ and what He has revealed about God it is only a dim light in comparison.

This brings us back to our passage. After telling His disciples that the world would persecute them because the world did not know the one who had sent Him or did not know His Father He goes on to prove this by pointing out to His disciples how the world had rejected Him or more precisely how the world rejected certain specific things about Him even though He Himself was the light of the world and therefore the perfect expression of His Father in the world.

So what were those specific things? First of all, the world in rejecting Christ rejected His words (John 15:22).

Let me read for you **John 15:22**. **“If I had not come and spoken to them...”** The first thing Christ pointed that the world rejected was what He had spoken to them. But of course we know that the world had not simply rejected what He was speaking to them but most importantly they had rejected what Christ's Father was speaking to them. This helps us to understand the next phrase. Let us once again go back to the verse. What does it say? **“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin?”** So what did He mean by this? Did He mean that if He had not come and spoken to them that they would not have been sinners? This obviously cannot be the truth since the Scriptures are very clear that **“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”** So what in the world did He mean when He said, **“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin?”**

Valley Bible Church - Sermon Transcript

When Christ told His disciples “If He had not come and spoken to the world they would not have sin,” He meant that they would not have to answer for the specific sin of rejecting His words or the words of His Father.

This point is then driven home further in **John 15:23**. Let me read this verse for you. **“He who hates Me hates my Father.”** Christ and His Father are inseparately linked; they are in fact one. Therefore to reject the words of Christ is to reject the words of the Father or in the words of **John 15:23**, **“He who hates Me hates My Father also.”** Christ and His Father are one and the same.

But Christ is not satisfied with simply highlighting the rejection of His words. There is another very specific way that the world had expressed their rejection of Him.

The world in rejecting Christ not only rejected His words but also His works (John 15:24). Let me now read for you **John 15:24**. **“If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and my Father as well.”** This is the same line of thought that Christ had introduced to us in **John 15:22**. Just as the words of Christ were also the words of His Father so were Christ’s works also the works of His Father. What does **John 1:18** tell us? **“No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”** So to reject the one was to reject the other and to hate the one was to hate the other.

Therefore in light of this let me ask you this question. Are Jews today who have rejected Christ worshipping the same God we are worshipping? Are Muslims who have rejected Christ worshipping the same God that we are worshipping? Is anyone who has rejected Christ either by flat out denying or appropriately responding to what the Scriptures has revealed about Christ’s person or work worshipping the same God that we are worshipping? And the answer is no! In fact, they do not even know Him.

So let me ask you a question. How serious of a sin is it to reject God’s fullest revelation of Himself to this world? Is it a more serious sin than lying? Yes! Is it more a more serious sin than stealing? Yes! Is it a more serious sin than murder? Yes! I cannot think of a more serious sin in terms of its consequences than this particular sin. Why? Rejecting God’s full revelation

Valley Bible Church - Sermon Transcript

of Himself very likely will make a person's future judgment certain (Hebrews 6:4-6).

Let me read for you **Hebrews 6:4-6**. “**For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, (5) and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, (6) and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.**”

Who is this speaking about? Is this speaking about someone who had in fact at one point in time been genuinely saved but then had lost their salvation? Absolutely not! This would be contrary to everything the New Testament teaches about the security of the believer.

Rather this passage, **Hebrews 6:4-6** is speaking of someone who had been exposed to the words and works of Christ and had understood the significance those words and works but had chosen to reject them. In other words, the person that the writer of Hebrews is speaking of in **Hebrews 6:4-6** is who in the face of total revelation has exercised total rejection.

It would be like someone here who had been among us for many years listening to the truths about the person of Christ and the works of Christ and even agreeing that all of what had been shared was true while at the same time enjoying the outpouring of praise and witnessing the transformation in the lives of those who not only professed faith but who was in fact walking by faith but then just walked away. They had in a very real sense tasted the heavenly gift and had been parkers of the Holy Spirit in a certain sense. But they never truly committed themselves to Christ. They would be very much like Judas.

This interpretation of this passage I believe is supported in **Hebrews 6:9** when it says, “**But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany [What?] salvation.**” And one of the things that certainly would accompany salvation would be what? Their perseverance!

Valley Bible Church -Sermon Transcript

So why did the world reject the words and works of Christ when Christ was here on earth? One answer is given to us in **John 15:25**. Psalms 35:19 and Psalms 69:4 prophesied that the world would hate Christ without cause and Christ is confirming in John 15:25 that is exactly what in fact happened.

Let us read this verse, **“But they [the world] have done this [rejected the words and works of Christ which were truly in fact the words and works of His Father] in order that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their Law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’”**

The rejection of Christ’s words and works had nothing to do with any imperfection with Christ in respect to either Christ’s words or His works. It was totally because of their own wickedness and hardness of heart.

The world hates Christians. They hate Christians because Christians are not a part of this world. They hate Christians because the world hates Christ. And finally as we have seen this morning the world hates Christians because they hate His Father.

We will not be aware of this hatred if we are a friend of the world but if we do in fact by the grace of God begin to set ourselves apart from this world as Christ’s ambassadors making His words and works known we will encounter that hatred in some form or fashion.

May God give us the grace as the ambassadors of Christ to go joyfully into a hostile world proclaiming the words and works of Christ with thanksgiving.