



Gospel Community Notes & Questions

Title: Hated without Cause

Text: John 15:18-16:4

Theme: Live and speak the Gospel no matter what it costs you.

Teaching Notes: Shortly before Jesus is taken away to be beaten and crucified, he warns his disciples that the world would hate them just as it had hated him. If you follow the ways of Jesus instead of the ways of the world, your life will convict the world of sin, and the world will oppose you. But Jesus urges a faithful witness empowered by the presence of the Spirit.

Outline:

1. Why did the world hate Jesus?

- a. Because the world didn't know the Father. (v. 21)
- b. Because his words and works convicted the world of sin. (vv. 22, 24)

2. Why does the world hate Christians?

- a. Because we follow Jesus, whom the world hated. (vv. 18, 20)
- b. Because we are not of the world. (v. 19)
- c. Because we live like Jesus. (v. 21)

3. How should you respond to potential opposition?

- a. Remember what Jesus said and how he was treated. (vv. 20, 4)
- b. Look for the Helper. (v. 26)
- c. Continue to bear witness. (v. 27)
- d. Remain faithful. (v. 1)



Questions to explore individually and with your group:

1. There's a famous quote attributed to Gandhi that says, "*I like your Christ; I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.*"
 - What's the clear implication here? "*If Christians would just . . .*"
 - What do you think this quote gets right? What does it get wrong?
2. The modern American Church seems to think the world will like and respect us if we're nice, winsome, loving Christians.
 - What are some reasons we believe that myth?
 - What are some potential problems with being seen by the world as "nice"? (Think about how the world defines terms like nice, winsome, and loving. Consider what other attributes of Jesus might be missing if we're just perceived of as "nice.")
3. What does it mean to be "of the world"? What are some ways a Christian should not – indeed, cannot – be "of the world"?
4. What has it actually cost you to follow Christ? What's the worst thing the world has said about you, done to you, or taken from you?
5. What primary resource does Jesus give you to help you remain faithful in the face of opposition? How does that resource help you? How often do you find yourself dependent on that resource now?
6. What common forms of faithlessness do you observe in the Christian Church? How do these manifest themselves in everyday life?
7. What have been some healthy Christian responses to persecution? What have been some unhealthy responses? (e.g. Discuss ways the Church compromises truth in the name of "grace" or compromises grace in the name of "truth.")
8. What are some specific ways you can "lovingly insist on the truth"?
9. What one actionable thing will you do this week in response to this Scripture?

Prayer Prompts:

1. Praise the Lord for being worthy of your trust no matter what.
2. Confess where you struggle with unfaithfulness, timidity, or hatred.
3. Invite the Spirit to work in/through you to lovingly insist on the truth.