

” My Word & Work Condemn those who don’t Believe”
John 15: 18-27 (vv. 22-24)
Facilitator: Min. Joseph Williams

Introduction:

With regard to the theme of the entire gospel of John, the portrayal of the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus, we should note that chapter 15 continues the theme of chapter 14. Jesus and the Father are seen as continuing to work together as One for our comfort and our salvation. That salvation is the result of our being made one with Jesus; something which could only be possible because of His omnipresence. Thus, Jesus is seen as continually claiming the same omnipresence as the Father. This fact is often overlooked, that what Jesus promises for their day by day future requires Him to be omnipresent (*John 14:13-14; John 14:20-21; John 14:23; John 15:4-7*). Furthermore Jesus will make known to them ‘all things that He has heard from His Father’ (*John 15:15*), and whatever they ask the Father in His Name, the Father will give it to them (*John 15:16*). Compare John 14:13-14 where it is Jesus Himself Who would do it for them when they asked in His Name. Jesus is thus to continue His ministry to them, and to all believers, from Heaven. He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives Today! he walks with me and talks with me!

The Lesson: “My Word & Work Condemn those Who don’t Believe”

Vv. 18-19

The disciples had already seen the response of men toward Jesus. Because of the treatment that Jesus received, they knew that genuine goodness, godliness and truth were not popular among non-believers. For a while the world will admire good men because they recognize something in them that their basic conscious approves of. However, let those good men in some way disturb their worldly views and they will immediately turn against them. This hatred arises because the true believers are ‘not of the world’. They do not have the same motivations. The True Believer’s motivations are not steeped with desires of self-indulgence, of self-glorification, or of self-advancement. But their single motivation is that in all things Christ be GLORIFIED! Therefore, their lives and beliefs are a constant denunciation of the world’s view.

The world accepts a little bit of goodness and godliness, but not too much, for then it becomes a nuisance and interferes with their plans. So, the disciples should not be surprised to find themselves hated in and by the world. Those who hated the One who chose them, will also hate those who are chosen. They are hated because they are Christ’s representatives, and because they teach the truth which often goes against what the world believes.

Vv. 20-21

The world is consistent in its hatred. Where it hates the Master, it hates those who are like the Master. The more Christ-like the disciples are, the more they can expect to receive the same treatment as did Jesus. For those who would respond in hatred to Jesus will respond to them in the same way. Those who would hate and persecute Him, will hate and persecute them. But in the end, this is because they do not know God the Father nor Jesus Christ the Son. If they had known the Father, they would have recognized Him in the Son, and then the whole world would have been changed.

We must of course ensure that the world's hatred is not caused because we are awkward, or deliberately difficult, or unwilling to consider other people's point of view. Jesus was guilty of none of these, although no doubt He was told that He was. (People who tell you that you have an attitude problem are regularly those who themselves have an attitude problem). But where we stand for what is right, and for right teaching and right behavior, in a firm but loving way, we will be hated for Christ's sake.

Vv. 22

This is the real meat of the matter and it speaks directly to the specific sin of the Jews rejection and hatred of Jesus. Jesus has come as a light into the world (*John 3:16-21; John 8:12*). His words have shone like a searchlight piercing into men's innermost being (*compare John 7:7*). But men shy from the light, for it reveals what they really are. They love darkness rather than light because by coming to the light what they do is shown to be evil in God's eyes (*John 3:19*). Previously such men had been living in a self-satisfied state, not fully aware of the inadequacies of what they believed. They were not aware of how sinful they were. But by His words (teaching) Jesus has brought home to them their inadequacy, undermining much of what they cherished, especially their sense of their own spiritual achievements. Thus, they no longer have any excuse, and if they are unwilling to admit it, and change (repent), they will hate Him for what He has revealed in them. However unfortunate, this hatred is an outward expression of their denial of Who Jesus is and brings upon them condemnation. It is always difficult to admit that we have been wrong and to begin again, but in the case of the non-believer this non-repentance brings death. If Jesus had not through His teachings confronted man with the fact of their wickedness they would have an excuse to continue in their evil and depraved behaviors.

Vv. 23-24

There must be no doubt about this, Jesus says. He who hates Me, the One who is a true revealer of the Father, also hates the Father. By His teaching and His appearing, Jesus has fully revealed the Father (*John 14:7-9*). ***They have both seen and heard (John 5:31-40)***. Therefore, to hate Him is to hate the Father. His point was that by coming into the world and preaching and working miracles He had confronted people with their rebellion against God. Jesus' words and works were the Father's who had sent Him. Therefore the world's rejection of Jesus constituted rejection of the Father also. To reject Jesus amounted to rejecting God. This is another strong implication of Jesus' deity. Thus, they are without excuse. Jesus said of Himself, ***"If I do not do the works of My Father do not believe Me, but if I do, though you do not believe me (My Words), believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me and I am in Him"*** (*John 10:37-38*). It is only by deliberately closing their eyes to the truth that they can refuse to hear Him, and in doing so they make themselves more sinful, and more resentful. This will always be the decidedly regenerate man's reaction to God's truth. (But we must be sure it is God's truth that they hate, and not our arrogance or our lack of consideration).

Vv. 25-27

This hatred and rejection was prophesied by David in *Psalms 35:19* and is the means by which God fulfilled his redemptive work. The hatred of men must result in the crucifixion of Christ in order that his people may be saved but the guilt rests on men, because they did what they wanted to do. Nothing about Jesus justified such hatred. But the "Helper", the "Holy Spirit" will bear witness to, make account of, and give proofs of Jesus' deity.