

The Relationship of Believers to the World, Part 1: Persecution



John 15:18-27

- This section is tied together by two important themes: the opposition of the world against the church, and the ministry of the Spirit to and through the church.
 - Our Lord has openly taught His disciples that one day persecution would come.
 - Throughout the gospel of John, it is evident that the religious establishment not only opposed Jesus, but also even sought to kill Him (John 5:16; 7:19, 25; 8:35, 59; 9:22).
 - Until the Lord returns, or until we die, we must live in this hostile world and face continued opposition.
 - The relationship of true believers to the world is a bleak picture.
1. The chilling reality, the world will hate the believer (v. 18). Note three things:
 - A. The meaning of the word “if” in this verse should be translated since (Matt. 5:11; 10:22; Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 3:12).
 - B. The “world” refers to the unbelievers: the unredeemed, the lost, those who have never trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
 - C. The believer is to “know” something.
 2. The unjustified reasons for the world’s hatred (v. 19:24). There are four reasons given.
 - A. The world hates believers because they are not of the world: they are a new creation (John 17:16; 2 Cor. 5:17; 6:17; 2 Th. 3:6).
 - B. The world hates believers because they are identified with Christ.
 - It is an impossibility for a true disciple to be above his Master or for a servant to be above his Lord (Rom. 12:1-2; John 17:14; 2 Cor. 4:9-11).
 - C. The world hates believers because it does not really know God.
 - Man’s idea of God is that of a Supreme Grandfather who protects and provides and gives no matter what a person’s behavior is (John 16:2-3; Acts 27:23; Eph. 4:18; 2 Tim. 3:6-7; 1 John 2:11).
 - D. The world hates believers because it is convicted of sin. Two things convict the world.
 - His message convicts the world of sin: it strips away the world’s excuse of sin (John 5:34; 5:45; 46-47).

- His life and works convict the world of sin (John 8:19; 28-29; 42; 55; 10:25, 37-38).

3. The terrible guilt of the world (v. 25).

- The world's hatred for Jesus Christ reveals that the true nature of the world is evil (John 15:22; Rom. 1:20; Psa. 109:5).

4. The promise of victory over the world (v. 26-27).

- A. There is victory through the Holy Spirit.**