

John, Part 41 — The Revelation of Jesus Christ — If the World hates you...

Jesus began this series of lessons after the Feast of Passover by showing believers their relationship to Him and the Father. He said that He is the True Vine and we are the branches. This is a love connection to Christ and all of the potential that results from abiding in Him. If we keep His commandments, we will abide in His love. Then Jesus said, “My commandment is that you love one another.” First, He revealed our relation to God and then our relationship to each other. Now in this next session, Jesus spoke about believer’s relationship to the world. Jesus was showing the distinction between those who belong to Him and those who are of the world. As part of that distinction, Jesus said we are His friends.

John 15:14–17 NKJV ¹⁴You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. ¹⁷These things I command you, that you love one another.

God has chosen people out of the world to be His own.

It has been God’s plan to have fellowship with mankind from the earliest time.

- Initially, the man and the woman were made for fellowship with God.
- After sin entered by Adam and Eve, that fellowship was broken. He called Noah from a corrupt generation and he was a just man, perfect in his generations; and Noah walked with God.
- After the flood, mankind once again began to go away from God.
- The whole earth had one language and one speech, and they came together in Shinar, which is Mesopotamia, Babel and Babylon, where they rebelled against God.
- He called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans, an ancient Mesopotamian city.
- God called His people out of Egypt.

Those He called He chose and appointed for service. Jesus is referring to the people He has called and chosen. He said, “He chose them to abide in Him, be His friends, and bear fruit.” This relationship with God’s Son is established on obedience and love. We walk in obedience to His commandments because we love Him. As we keep His commandment, we will abide in His love. God has determined to demonstrate His great love through His chosen people.

His chosen people have a purpose for being in the world.

1 Peter 2:9-10 NKJV But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

By calling us out of the world, Jesus has made believers His representatives to the world. God has determined that through them, the world will know the love, mercy, grace and power of Jesus Christ. Through them, the world will know the change that Christ makes. They will proclaim His praises and reveal His light to the world.

Jesus Christ is our Example. In life, our focus must remain on Jesus Christ. He is the Vine and we are the branches. As Jesus loved and obeyed His Father, we are commanded to love and obey the Father. Through our abiding relationship with Him, Christ’s character will become the distinctive quality of our lives. He has called us out of the darkness of the world

into His marvelous light and life.

It is important for us to pay attention to the way that Jesus lived in this world. The way He lived is an example of what God wants to do in us through Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. Just as Christ's earthly life was marked with the strong influence of the Holy Spirit's power and abiding presence, believers will be set apart from the world.

Jesus said, "I am the Light and Life of the World."

Everyone that walked with Christ noticed God's grace, mercy, and love. In His presence was an abundance of joy, hope, and peace. Everything He did was tempered with patience, longsuffering, and goodness. His words and works were a demonstration of the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit and God the Father. It was obvious that in Him was no darkness. Jesus made it abundantly clear why He was here and what He was doing. He came into this world to do the Father's will and abide in His love.

Everything Jesus did was a direct contradiction to the WORLD and the SPIRIT OF THE WORLD.

Jesus made it clear that He was not in harmony with the world or the spirit of the world and as a result, Jesus said the world hated Him.

John 15:18 NKJV If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

1 John 3:13 NKJV Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

What does Jesus mean when He says, "The world hates you?"

The "world" represents everyone who does not belong to Christ and does not bear His nature. They fulfill the interests of the world and are controlled by the spirit of the world. They bear the image of the world and are subject to the power of the world and sin. They demonstrate the work, nature and character of the world. They are not a part of Christ.

It is important for us to remember that Jesus called and separated believers from this evil world.

We were in the kingdom of darkness and death until He called us into His marvelous light and life. He brought the body of believers unto Himself. He has chosen, adopted, accepted, and engrafted them into His body.

Jesus said, "The world hated Me." Why would the world hate Him?

Jesus stood in contradiction to the thoughts, actions, and mannerisms of the world. He represented God's righteousness, holiness and goodness. If the world hated the Lord, it will hate all who resemble Him. Although He healed their sick, raised their dead, cleansed their lepers, cast out demons, and fed the multitudes, they hated Jesus. It appears the more good that Jesus did the more they hated Him.

John 15:25 NKJV If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

Do you find it strange that the world hated Jesus?

- He was light and they were darkness.
- He was good and they were evil.
- He lived without sin and they were sinners.
- He did good that they could not do.
- The world did not like having their unfruitful deeds exposed.
- If Jesus was like the world they would have loved Him.

Christ's works were a testimony of His relationship and fellowship with the Father.

The world cannot give what Christ can give. The world cannot do what Christ can do. The world cannot be what Christ is. His words and works revealed the will of God and the sinfulness of men. All of this was done to point the lost world to the only solution for sin and death. Anyone who turned to Him found life and light. Jesus showed us a better way.

In these final lessons with His disciples, Jesus is clarifying the special relationship they were given.

Notice the vital connection: "I am the True Vine, My Father is the vinedresser and you are the branches." This illustration depicts clearly the blessedness of abiding in Christ. God has made it possible for the life that is in Christ to dwell in us. That new life in Christ causes us to definitely produce fruit that is a testimony of Christ. God expects that fruit to remain and continue to produce more fruit as we are connected to Christ. Since we are connected to Christ, we are to love God and love one another. As a result, the world will recognize our connection with Christ.