

The World at War (With Us)
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John 15:17-27, John 16:1-4
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Please turn with me in your Bibles to John 15. We will be moving to Verses 18 and following this morning, all the way through 16:4 actually, is the new section of this passage, the new passage we're going to be in.

I'm going to take a moment just to say a word of appreciation to our Deacons, and the other men who have helped them in getting ready for some changes and growth that our church has had. I mean, they've done so many things, so many guys are working hard. I don't know if you've noticed the lighting improvement in the last couple of months. You can see your Bibles now no matter where you sit, I think. Used to be you had to find the light spot, or ask somebody else, "What page are we on?" or whatever, but also the air flows better. It used to be the arctic zone right over here, it seemed like it was about 40 degrees on most Sundays. It is more like up into around 70 I think now, 65 or 70 anyway. But it has taken a lot of work, and a lot of guys have been at work on that, our Deacons leading the way, and our new Deacons included.

We are now videotaping the services, and you may notice there is a little more room because there is a number of people sitting in our sanctuary overflow which is beyond that back wall there. There is another room that seats, or will seat up to about 70 people, and so there are probably 40 or 45 people out there this morning making room for us to grow. And our Deacons have done such a great job. It is amazing how the gifts that God has given the body, when we do our part, what the Lord does. I marvel at it, especially just realizing how if we just had a few of us of the same types of gifts, how terrible things would be. You know, if you just had a bunch of fingers, no feet to take you around anywhere, you couldn't do anything with your hands and your fingers. We need every part of the body. I'm just so grateful, Patti and I are just honored to serve here with you all. And all the work that goes in every week to ministering to the body, whether it is our nursery ministry, or the meals on Wednesday night, or all the fellowship, the teaching that is done. We're so grateful. So I just wanted to take a moment to say that.

Now, looking at John 15:18 through John 16:4. The previous five Sundays, not counting last week, last week we looked at the resurrection as we celebrated Resurrection Sunday, Easter Sunday, we departed from our exposition of John and we went to Romans 1. But we are back this morning, picking up where we left off

two weeks ago in John 15. We had spent five Sundays in a row looking at those first 17 verses of John 15, the metaphor that Jesus uses when He says, “I am the vine and you are the branches.” We noted how that extended metaphor cast a kind of surprising few moments of calm in the midst of what was a turbulent night for the disciples. You remember that this is all taking place on the night before Jesus is crucified. The disciples have no idea of what is coming, but they do know that things are very disconcerting that had been happening all night. Jesus washed their feet. This was a scandalous act of incredible humility that showed them the cross. They don’t fully understand it but they are unsettled all night.

Then Jesus tells them that He is departing from them, He is leaving. He says, “I am going away. I’m going away. I’m going away” and Chapter 14, the refrain of Chapter 14, it begins and ends with this exhortation of Jesus, “Let not your heart be troubled.” The idea is their hearts are troubled. “Don’t let your heart continue to be troubled,” Jesus is saying. “Stop letting your heart be troubled.” They are in troubling circumstances. The end of Chapter 14, Jesus tells them it is time to get up and go, “Rise, we need to leave for the ruler of this world is coming,” in the sense that, “We’re marching into battle.” So they are somewhat bewildered, but they are definitely struggling with anxiety, anxious thoughts, fearful emotions. And Jesus along the way stops and tells them this metaphor of the vine and the branches. He must have given them a respite from their anxiety. The vine and metaphor is such a comforting picture, “Abide in Me and you will bear fruit. You are going to be connected to Me just like those branches are connected to that vine.” He gave them a sense of calm and serenity in the midst of what was otherwise a very troubling night.

And then, I wanted to say that because I wanted you to see how jarring His next words are. If it was surprising for Him to talk about a vine and the branches, it is not surprising for Him to go back to the reality of what is going on which are turbulent moments that are happening the next few hours. Indeed it will happen for the rest of their earthly lives, but note how jarring it is. To show you this I want to read Verse 17 to set the context. Now Jesus has been telling about the vine and the branches, and He said, “Listen, abide in Me, and if you abide in Me you are going to have fullness of joy. If you abide in Me you are going to have transformed relationships so that you will love one another with the supernatural love of God.” You see how encouraging those words are? “Fullness of joy, supernatural love, that is what is awaiting you. That is what you are supposed to do in the midst of turbulent times is love one another with a supernatural love and be filled with My joy.” But look at Verse 18, now He has just said five times in these six verses the word ‘love’, and now look at Verse 17:

John 15:17 ~ This I command you, that you love one another.

He wraps up the vine metaphor. *This I command you, that you love one another.*

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

Do you see that? Incredible disjuncture. *“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.*

John 15:19-27 ~ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave 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. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates Me hates My Father also. 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. 25 But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’

26 “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, 27 and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

John 16:1-4 ~ “These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling. 2 They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God. 3 These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me. 4 But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

Let’s pray together.

Father, we thank You this morning for Your word. We thank You for the sufficiency of Your word, as we read about earlier that it is that which makes us adequate, thoroughly furnished for every good work. It is all we need to make us adequate, ready for everything that You call us to do. We ask that by Your Spirit, You might accomplish that purpose in the hearts of Your people today. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Now, the title of the message this morning is 'The World at War', John 15:18 through John 16:4. We'll begin looking at that subject this morning. In fact, you might put in a parenthesis, 'The World at War (With Us)'. I use that title, it was a show that you may have seen, some of you who are older may have seen this. It came out in the 70's I think. It was a documentary about World War II, 'The World at War'. I remember watching that with great interest, just marveling at what it must have been like to have lived through that time when the world was at war, essentially. America fighting in the Pacific, fighting the Japanese, fighting in Europe, fighting the Germans. I remember hearing a number of times, and you probably have heard those words too, very familiar words, Franklin Delano Roosevelt:

Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy...

He spoke those words on December 8, 1941, Monday morning, the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked. Listen to the speech, I'm not going to read all of it, but I'm going to read a significant portion, and as you think about this, think about what must have been going through the minds of people who had come out of their Kansas cornfield and heard the news that Sunday night. Or people in middle Tennessee that heard over the radio, or heard from someone else who had heard, about something that happened at Pearl Harbor. When they heard these words, what must have been going through their hearts, and in their minds? As the President of the United States addressed the nation, they heard that there had been this incredible attack, but they were just beginning to get the information. It wasn't like today where you would have someone on the scene with a satellite camera, you are seeing everything as it happens in real time. You know, the information is trickling in over the radio, but they heard the President of the United States say these things, huddled around their radios all over the United States.

Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy, the United States of American was suddenly, and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. The United States was at peace with that nation, and at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with the

government, and its emperor, looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese ambassador to the United States, and his colleagues, were still meeting with the Secretary of State. It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days, or even weeks ago.

During the intervening time, the Japanese government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace. The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu. Yesterday, the Japanese government also launched an attack against Malaya. Last night, Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong. Last night, Japanese forces attacked Guam. Last night, Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands. Last night, the Japanese attacked Wake Island. This morning, the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has therefore undertaken a surprise offensive extending through the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves, hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger. I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked, and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.

And so ended his speech. Roosevelt basically revealed what was obvious by the actions taken by Japan, a state of war *had* existed. There was a sham show of peace, but the Japanese were at war with us, and planning that attack for many weeks, possibly months in advance. It does no good to hope that we could, you know, “Let’s all get together and pretend that it didn’t happen.” No, you can’t avoid war when someone is determined to make war with you. There is a sense in which the effect of Jesus’ words are in some ways even more shocking than what Americans heard as they began to hear those news reports, and then hear the president say what he told them. If you were a child of God, if you were a follower of Jesus Christ, if you were redeemed and bought by His blood, you belong to Him, and the reality is that what Jesus is saying to His disciples is true of us, we are now at war. A state of war has existed between the people of God, the children of God, and this present world. No amount of pretending, or hoping that were not so can change that. Jesus understands that His disciples need to see this clearly if

they are going to be able to bear up under the difficulties that are coming. They need to understand the reality of what it means to be a follower of God in the midst of a dark world. What is it to be a son of light in the midst of encroaching, increasing darkness?

I want us to begin to look at this subject under some questions—three W’s and an H. I really plan to just cover the first two W’s today—*What?* and *Why?* And next week we will look at *When?* and *How?* If you are a follower of Christ, what is your relationship to the world? That is the first question. *What? What is your relationship to the world?* The second question, *Why is it this way?*

1) What is Your Relationship to the World?

A) You Will Be Hated:

What is your relationship to this world in a word? War. There are two sub-points the text tells us, that unpack for us that reality that war really is our relationship to the world. Jesus says first of all, what is your relationship to the world if you are a follower of Jesus Christ? You are hated. He makes this very clear. ***“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.*** Now we might think, in Verse 18, that the ‘*if*’ means maybe the world is going to hate you. “If it happens, know it hated me first.” What is the nature of that conditional clause? That’s the question, right? But Verse 19 is going to answer it for us. ***If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.*** So the reality is, the ‘*if*’ doesn’t really mean ‘*if it happens*’, but it means ‘*when*’. “When the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.” In fact, the tense of the verbs is interesting, ‘*hates*’ in Verse 18 and Verse 19, you see that in the English it is in the present tense, and the Greek present is there as well.

Remember the Greek present tense is not just about the time of action. Tenses of verbs in Greek are not just about the time of action like they are in English. We have past, present, future, but in Greek tense is about kind of action as well. Not just time, but kind, and the Greek present tense speaks of continuous action. So when He uses that tense, ***...because of this the world hates you.*** It means continually hates you. Now the word ‘*hate*’ means ‘*hate*’, it means ‘*to abhor, to reject*’. It pictures not only outward attitudes, but deep-seated inward hostility. In fact, the word is used seven times in the passage. You will be hated.

B) You Will Be Persecuted:

Secondly, what is your relationship to the world? You are hated, and He says, “You will be persecuted,” the second sub-point. Verse 20:

John 15:20 ~ Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;

Here is another conditional sentence, ***...If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;*** Did they persecute Jesus? Yes, continually. So we know that if they persecuted Him, they will persecute us. In fact, Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:12, we read a little while ago:

2 Timothy 3:12 ~ Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Now the word ‘persecute’ means ‘to chase after, to hunt down’. It could be used as ‘someone going after someone to arrest them, to gain control of them’. Now they didn’t really come after, the passage Ted read earlier from 1 Timothy 1 when Paul talks about his conversion, he mentions that he was persecuting the church. Remember, that is what the apostle Paul, before he was Paul, did. Remember his name was Saul. You can read about him in the early chapters of Acts. There in Acts 7, it is Stephen’s stoning, Paul/Saul before his conversion, Saul stands there approving of the murder of Stephen.

Then we read that in Chapter 9, Saul was so zealous to attack the cause of Christ. Now he was a religious man, he was a Pharisee, he thought a faithful Jew. He got letters from the high priest so that he could go to Damascus and chase down Christians, and bring them back for trial. Jewish believers. He wanted to persecute the church. I mean, ‘chase after, stretch out after to grab’, the idea. But persecution doesn’t always mean physical arrest, it can mean anytime people are sort of out to get you. That is what He is saying, “They will be out to get you.” If you are a child of God, the people of the world will in their hearts be out to get you. They will hate you and they will be out to get you, but it is important for us to talk about the word ‘world’ for a moment. Look how He repeats this word. It occurs five times in Verse 19.

John 15:19 ~ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

He didn't want to use any 'it'. You know a pronoun could have been supplied a number of places there. You could have said, "If you were of the world, it would love its own, but because you are not of it, but I chose you out of it, because of this it hates you." You could have said it that way, but He chose to not use any pronouns and five times say the word 'kósmos', the Greek word for 'world'. It is a word that is very important in John's Gospel, used more than 75 times, way more than any other book in the New Testament. And 'kósmos', we know the word 'cosmos', right? It is an English transliteration of that word. For us it means 'the universe', but the original Greek word meant 'the order, the arrangement', and it could be referred to as 'the universe'. 'The order, the arrangement of the visible material world'. But 'kosméō', the verb which it comes from means 'to arrange, to dispose, to order', so that the word 'kósmos' came to mean, and the New Testament authors, and particularly John, when they use it, they mean 'the order and arrangement, and disposition of the whole mass of humanity in a state of alienation from God, hostility toward God, and in active rebellion to God'. They mean the whole mass of humanity in a state of alienation, hostility, and active rebellion against God. And the idea of order and arrangement, it pictures the fact that, and what Jesus said in a verse we read little while ago, or I mentioned to you, when He said right before they got up to leave, He tells us in Chapter 14:30:

John 14:30 ~ I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming,...

The ruler of the 'kósmos' is coming. Three times in this farewell address, this Farewell Discourse, Jesus uses that phrase 'the ruler of the world'. He uses it also in 16:11. There is one other place. Oh, Chapter 12 and Verse 31. So that was one time before the Farewell Discourse, but twice in the Farewell Discourse, 'the ruler of the world'. So He is saying that the world, the arrangement, the order of the mass of humanity is ruled over by someone. Now who is He talking about? Satan, who Paul calls in 2 Corinthians 4:4, 'the god of this age'. Paul, also referring to Satan says in Ephesians 2:1-2, he says:

Ephesians 2:2 ~ ...prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Do you see that? Satan himself is in a sense controlling and influencing so much that it is as if he is almost animating. Now he is not really animating, but he is exerting such influence, such control that Jesus in John 8, remember what He said to the Jews who were talking to Him? He said, "You are of your father, the devil. You want to do the will of your father. He is a murderer from the beginning and

that is why you want to kill Me. He is a murderer and you are just like your dad.” That is what He is saying. They said, “We have no father but Abraham.” Jesus says, “No, you are of your father, the devil. Everyone who is not redeemed, everyone who is not born again, is born into this world system, in Adam,” and what was Adam’s problem?

Adam basically bought the lie, Adam and Eve bought the lie, the lie of Satan. What was the lie of Satan? He said to Eve, “The day that you eat of that fruit, you won’t die. The day that you eat of that fruit, you will be like God.” When you look at Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, what you see is that was exactly Lucifer’s, his name before he became Satan, Lucifer’s own sin. He wanted to be like the Almighty. He wanted not to submit to God, not to honor God, he wanted to be equal to God. And so then he falls, and a third of the angels in Heaven fall in this rebellion, and then he comes down and tempts Adam and Eve away from their submission to God. And so that when Adam and Eve have their first child, Cain, he is now born in the image of his father, Adam, who is now a sinner. And so that David could say, even King David, “I was conceived in iniquity, brought forth in sin.” So the sin nature is there. This idea of wanting to be my own god, wanting to be in control, not wanting to submit, and so the world system is basically, Satan is the organization of how the world thinks in opposition. He is directing it, and every unbeliever, you and I before we were saved, we were willing participants, gladly receiving the lie. So that is the world system, the ‘*kósmos*’. He says, “You will be hated by the world, you will be persecuted by the world.” This is why Jesus said in Luke 6:26:

Luke 6:26 ~ Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for thus they spoke of the false prophets before you.

Now, this is certainly not pleasant, encouraging on the front end. You know, did you wake up this morning thinking, “I hope I hear a sermon about how everybody hates me. That would just be so encouraging.” None of us wants that, and there is a sense in which this whole thing, we have to remember that the world is such a mess because of sin. It ought not be this way. I mean, when you share Christ with someone that you care about at work, or when you share Christ with someone at school, or when you talk to someone in your family about the Gospel, you are doing the most wonderful, kind thing that you could possibly do for them. You are humbling yourself, taking a risk, and you’re loving them with everything that you have and everything that you are, and yet what this says is they many times will just be more angry with you and hate you more. It doesn’t make sense.

Now, imagine you're dying of some sickness. Some plague strikes the world, and there's a way that you could be saved if you have an injection. Somebody comes up to you and says, "I have the antidote right here. Roll up your sleeve." You roll up your sleeve and they give it to you, and you say, "I hate you for doing that to me!" That's crazy, but that's essentially is what He's saying happens, and it happened to Him. The best news the world could ever—it was unimaginable. When you really look at things rightly, the magnitude of our sin, when Adam and Eve in a perfect world, I mean, think about this. They lived in absolute perfection and harmony. All the creatures of the world, everything was beautiful and lovely. The most wonderful things that you can imagine, the most wonderful things we ever experience, pale in comparison to what every day was like there. And then not only that, the beauty of creation, their ability to understand things, to see things, their relationship, complete transparency and oneness, and then God would come down and walk with them in the cool of the day. And God gives them one command, one restriction. Their Bible was this command. This was all they needed. "Don't eat from that one tree. The rest of the world is yours. Enjoy. Don't eat from that one tree."

That's the character of God. God is so gracious, so giving, so kind, that His disposition is to share the bounty of His goodness, not to restrict it. I say that because in sin, you have been tempted since you were born, to believe God is not good, He's holding out on you, and that He wants to keep things back from you. That's exactly what Satan said to Eve. But that is not who God is. God is gracious and kind. The whole world was open. There was one little restriction, and what did Satan do? He didn't say, "Look at all the things that you have here." Satan said, "He told you that you can't eat from any tree of the garden, hasn't He?" What? Where did that come from? He's trying to throw some ridiculous doubt into their minds. "He put you in this garden and He doesn't let you eat from any of the trees in it, does He?" "No, He said we can't eat from that one tree." "Do you know why He told you that? It's because He's a liar." That's what Satan basically said. "He wants to hold you back. He doesn't want you to be all that you can be. You can be like God. You can know good and evil." So mankind, in the face of this incredible goodness, and love, and tenderness where God has set man in this incredible position of ruling over everything, and everything in perfect harmony, he's got everything he can ever imagine or long for. God, relating to him personally, speaking to him, why? Why would God care to speak to some little—even though he's sinless, he's still just a little bit of dust, but God's set His love upon him and Eve. He has all of that and he spurns that love and listens to a snake.

Now, if I were God, I would have just destroyed the whole thing, but God is incredibly merciful that He restrains His wrath and does not destroy mankind and wipe him off the face of the earth, and end this whole situation. But He begins at that point to begin to do what is necessary to save man. Even there in the garden, He promises the first preaching of the Gospel when He tells Satan, “You will bruise his heel, and he will bruise your head,” speaking of the man born of the woman, that I mentioned last Sunday. And then the best news in the world finally came when the angel announced to the shepherd, “Behold, I bring you good news of great joy which shall be for all people. This is the best news in the world. It’s for everybody. “Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord.” What you need is a Savior, and a Savior has been born. Shout it from the mountaintops. Let everyone know.” Over the hills, or whatever the words are of that song. Jesus Christ is born.

John the Baptist then makes the announcement. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The King has come and He’s going to deliver you. You can be free. You can be saved through His blood.” Then Jesus comes, speaking with authority, healing diseases, raising people from the dead. Shouldn’t they have loved Him? Shouldn’t they have been thrilled? But the wonder of it is they hated Him, and had we been there, we would have joined in. Your relationship to the world is you’re at war. You are hated. You will be persecuted. The second question is:

2) Why is It This Way?

There are four sub-points to this question in answering this question. Jesus lays them out for us in the passage. He says first of all, “The reason that the world hates you is you are not of the world.” That’s the first reason. You are not of the world. Look at Verse 19:

John 15:19 ~ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

You are not of the world. He says, “The world loves its own.” The world loves those who are like it. The world loves those who share its agenda and its goals, but you’re not of the world. If you belong to Jesus Christ, that is the thing that happened to you. You stopped belonging to the world. Though you were born in the world and you were at one time of the world, you’re no longer of the world.

God has worked in your heart. How does a person get saved? God works in their heart and grants them a new heart, regeneration. He gives new life. The Bible pictures that we're not just sick people who need to be healed. We're dead people who need to be made alive. And when He makes you alive, then when you hear the Gospel, or usually you're made alive as you hear the Gospel, when you're made alive and you hear the Gospel, then you repent and you believe, because He gives you the grace to repent and believe. So you turn from your sin and you turn to Christ. In repentance, you see your hopeless estate apart from God. You see His wrath, just wrath, hanging over you, and you see the sufficiency of His Son, the wonder that Jesus would come into the world and live in our sin-sick world, and suffer in our place on Calvary, and be punished for our sins. He experienced the wrath of God vented upon Himself, so that He could be the sin-bearer, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, dying in our place, taking our penalty, and then rising and leading us into glory.

So when the Lord does that, He gives you a new heart and He gives you a whole new outlook, so that what used to be that which you hate, now you love. Now, you still have sin in you. Paul says that. "I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." He says that as a believer. He says, "The thing that I want to do, I don't do. Sometimes the thing I don't want to do, that I do. I see in this principle that sin is present within me. Who will deliver me from this body of death?" We still have this sin nature, but in your heart of hearts, if you've truly been born again, in your heart of hearts, deep down what you long for is holiness and to be with Christ. And that is something radical. That is an act of new creation, and when you were created new, when you were born again, you no longer are of this dead and dying and decaying age.

That's why I love the words that the New Testament authors use. Peter says you're strangers and aliens in the world. He says that in 1 Peter 1:1 and 1 Peter 2:11. In 1 Peter 2:11 he says, "I exhort you as strangers and aliens, to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." One of the keys to overcoming fleshly lusts is to understand who you are. You're a stranger and an alien. You're from somewhere else, acting like you belong here. Understand who you are, and then abstain, because not only do you need to know who you are, but you also need to know the impact. Fleshly lusts war against the soul. Paul says, "Our citizenship is in heaven from which we await a Savior." We're citizens of Heaven. We're passing through.

So it's understandable then that the world, that those who are not of Heaven, would find us not so attractive. I mean, just in that, strangers, new people, they don't talk like us. Though our accents if you're from the south, southern people around you

will recognize that. If you're from the north or wherever you're from, we have our accents, and we may talk alike, but in reality there's something more fundamental about the Christian, that is different. And where people might not like somebody because of the way they talk, or the way that they act, or the way that they think, because of their cultural upbringing or their background, the Christians become even more radically different. And the more that you grow in Christ, the more this becomes evident. The world loves its own. It doesn't love those that are not its own. So why is it this way? Why are you at war? Well, the world hates you and persecutes you, because first of all, you're not of the world.

Secondly, why is it this way? Why is the world at war with you? It's because you're chosen out of the world by Christ. The reason that you're not of the world, He says in Verse 19:

John 15:19 ~ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

As we're reading carefully the Scripture, this helps you to see emphasis. He says:

John 15:19 ~ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but...

That's a conjunction, and adversative conjunction, right? An adversative conjunction is a conjunction that brings up the opposite thought.

John 15:19 ~ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but...

Something totally different is going on. It would love you if you were of its own, but you are not of the world. I've called your attention to that, because look at what He says after this.

John 15:19 ~ but because you are not of the world, but...

That second *but* there in that sentence, I think is striking. It's another adversative conjunction. In fact, in the Greek it's the stronger adversative conjunction of the two. You would expect that He would say, "But because you are not of the world, you see, because I chose you out of the world." Explain why you're not of the world. "It's because I chose you out of the world." But He doesn't. He says, "But you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world. He doubles down on the adversative. It's like emphatically saying, "You are not anything to do with this

world, and the reason that's true, the reason is because I chose you out of the world." It's a strong adversative conjunction. "You were of the world, but now you're not, and it's because I chose you out of the world."

It's important, because especially when you're facing opposition, when you're on the battle lines, this has such tremendous implications. This means that you're going to be comforted by the fact that you are standing where you are, being persecuted, whether it's a small thing, someone just not treating you right at work, or it's rolling of the eyes when you talk about something to do with spirituality, or it's words behind your back. Maybe it's just those kinds of things, but those still hurt. Or maybe it's full out persecution where someone is, as we see happening around the world, where people are dying for their faith. Somewhere on that spectrum, no matter where you are, you find yourself whether it's the small kind of rolling of the eyes, you're still on the battle lines as a soldier for Christ, and how encouraging it is to know—this is what He's saying. You're not there because you chose Him. You are where you are because He chose you.

Now, you might think, "Well, we certainly didn't choose Him," but we chose Him because He chose us. Our choosing is a result of His. It could not happen without His. That's what He's saying, and He's emphasizing what He said just a few verses before in Verse 16. Look back a few Verses:

John 15:16 ~ You did not choose Me but I chose you,...

And then Verse 19:

John 15:19 ~ ...but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world,...

It's His action, His will, His determination. So the sense is when you find yourself in persecution, you can understand, "Wait, You put me here. I didn't ask for this." We can doubt ourselves, right? I make lots of mistakes all the time. And one of the things about married life, I know Patti and I talk back over our past, and we'll think, "Why did we do this?" and usually it's because I made a mistake. I thought that was the right thing. And looking back at it, it looks like a mistake, but ultimately, of course, God is sovereign. I'm always happy to bring that up, but anyway, the reality is we can make mistakes, and if it was just up to us, if it was just up to our decision, when things really got hot, it would be a lot easier to turn and run. But when you know you are where you are, that you have been put on the front lines exactly where the Commander in Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ, the

Captain of our salvation, has placed you, that will enable you to stand. That will help you. That's why He tells us this. He's saying, "Guys, you need to know this. You need to remember this. That's why I reiterated what I said in Verse 16. You didn't choose Me, but I chose you, and I appointed you." And that word appointed back from Verse 16 means *placed*. "I have placed you exactly where you are. I chose you out of the world. I selected you."

The wonder of His grace ought to cause our hearts to want to lift Him up. Why did He save us? And it also helps us to understand the person apart from us. They're doing what we would still be doing if it weren't for the grace of God. So it gives you mercy toward them. You just pray, "Lord, work in their heart. Bring them to Yourself." But it's His action, it's His will, and it's His determination. That's why you're where you are. That's why you're in His army now. So why is the world at war with us? We're not at war with them, not the people in the world. We're at war with the prince of the power of the air, yes. Ephesians 6 says that our struggle is not with flesh and blood, but against the principalities and powers, the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. That's who we're fighting against.

There's a song that the Gettys sing. I love so much of their music. One of the songs talks about how we rage against the captor to set the captives free. We're not fighting against the people. We're fighting against him. So we're actually loving our enemies even as they hate us, and it's that love sometimes that God uses to open their hearts to the Gospel. "Why are you loving me when I hate you?" It opens their ears. God uses it to open their hearts.

You're not of the world. You're chosen out of the world. Why do they hate us? It's because we're not of the world. We're chosen out of the world. Thirdly, the world is at war with you, because you bear the Name of Jesus. Verse 21:

John 15:21 ~ But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake,...

They'll persecute you. They will hate you. Why? "For My Name's sake." The Name of Jesus Christ, that is one of the great testimonies to the power of Jesus' Name, and the reality that He is truly the Son of God, the one Savior of the world. Just look at how people respond to the Name of Jesus. When I say the Name of Jesus, sometimes people use the Name of Jesus and they just use those letters '*Jesus*', but Name means not just the alphabet, the letters that make up the word, the sounds. No, it means the character, the true Person of Jesus. When you're talking about the Jesus of the Bible and you use His Name, it's amazing what

happens. It's amazing how you can end a conversation at the water cooler just by mentioning the Lord Jesus. People are talking about, "This is what I did this weekend. We went to so-and-so... I heard a great sermon about the glory of Christ," and suddenly the conversation is over. The Name of Jesus, we bear the Name of Jesus. Look what He says. "They will hate you for My Name's sake, who I am and what I've done, My character, My Name. That's why they will hate you." Look how much He speaks of them hating Him. Four times in the passage He says, "They have hated Me." Verse 18:

John 15:18 ~ ...it has hated Me before it hated you.

Verse 23:

John 15:23 ~ He who hates Me hates My Father also.

Verse 24:

John 15:24 ~ but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well.

Verse 25:

John 15:25 ~ 'They hated Me without a cause.'

The world hates Jesus. He tells us in John 7:7, when His brothers told Him to go show Himself to the world, He tells us why the world hates Him. Jesus says to his brothers:

John 7:7 ~ The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil.

When Jesus comes onto the scene, He makes His glory known, and the world sees how wicked and evil it is. That's essentially what He's basically saying in this passage. In fact, He's going to say, the next point is, the fourth thing is you are now representing also the Name of the Father, because He points out how, "He who hates Me, hates My Father also." Essentially He's saying this, and He says, "They hate Me because they did not know My Father," Verse 21:

John 15:21 ~ ...they do not know the One who sent Me.

Essentially what He's saying is this. The reason the world hates believers is we remind them of Jesus, and they hate Jesus because He is the full expression of who God is. The reason they hate us is because they hate God. This is why Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:12, "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will experience persecution," because the more godly you live, the more you look like Jesus, and the more you look like Jesus, the more you look like the Father. The more you look like the Father, the more they will hate you. So it is a convicting index of where we are spiritually at times, and this doesn't mean we're supposed to go around trying to have a martyr complex and trying to offend people unnecessarily. No, we should be loving people, being kind to people, but we should be lifting up Christ. That's what we're going to look at next time is how we're to respond in these situations. But we need to understand if we're going to stand up in the midst of difficulty, and if the Lord allows for great persecution to break out in our lifetime, we need to understand what Jesus wanted His disciples to understand. He's basically saying, "Don't be surprised. You won't be trapped and scandalized, you won't stumble if you understand that listen, they hate you because they hated Me. They persecute you because they persecuted Me. Why? Because you are not of this world even as I am not of this world."

Remember Jesus said to the Jews, "I am not of this world. You are of this world." He chose us out of the world. We bear His Name. We bear the Name of His Father. And how we're supposed to essentially respond is to set our affection on Heaven. I want you to turn to Hebrews 11 for a couple of verses, and then we're going to turn over to 13 and we'll wrap up here today.

It's interesting that the book of Hebrews is written to Hebrew Christians, that is, Jewish Christians. They were being persecuted big time. They were being hounded by Jews all around them. They were being turned into the Romans, told on to the Romans. This was a very tough time for these people, but he reminds them in this passage that Ted preached on a number of weeks ago, the Hall of Faith, Hebrews 11:13-16. He says:

Hebrews 11:13 ~ All these (speaking of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah) died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed (confessed what?) that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

We don't belong here. Our home is in Heaven.

Hebrews 11:14 ~ For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. 15 And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

We're to set our affection on Heaven. The more the world hates you, look forward to Heaven, and just be reminded, "Oh yeah, that's right. I forgot, because I keep thinking that I'm at home in this world." Don't you think that sometimes? You expect things to go well, and then you look around you, and it's helpful today in the day we live in, it's easy to see this is not our home. We look at lot more like that passage I read earlier from 2 Timothy 3, don't we? The world is just getting worse, and worse, and worse, and worse around us. Well, when that's happening, don't be discouraged. Don't be despairing. Just look forward to Heaven, and be willing then to stand with Christ and accept His rejection. Turn over to Hebrews 13, some of the last exhortations that he gives to the people, these Jewish Christians who were tempted to turn away from Christ as they experienced Christian persecution. Look at this image, how beautiful this image is. Verse 12:

Hebrews 13:12 ~ Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

So Jesus, to save us, suffered outside the city limits, outside the gate. That is representative as being outside of the place of blessing. He was cursed outside the gate. He was scorned outside the gate. He was crucified at Golgotha outside the city of Jerusalem on the garbage dump, humiliated there, rejected there. Look what He says in Verse 13:

Hebrews 13:13 ~ So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

Jesus is outside the camp. If you want to be with Jesus, you have to be willing to go outside the camp. And isn't being with Jesus so wonderful that it doesn't matter if the world hates you? Go outside the camp. Look what he says after that:

Hebrews 13:14 ~ For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

That's the calling of the people of God. The world is at war with us, but we are on the side of victory, and every battle that we experience, every wound that we experience, when it happens for the glory of God, we should rejoice. May the Lord help us to be ready to stand for Him no matter what circumstances we face.

Let's pray together...

Our Father, we thank You for the privilege of being called by Your Name and being called by the Name of Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We don't know why You would have set Your Name upon us, but we rejoice in Your incredible grace and mercy. Father, help us to be more and more filled with wonder and gratitude for the great work that You have done for us in Christ, that we would be more completely surrendered to the concerns of this world, that we would be able to love those around us with Your love, and to lift up Your Son in our words and our actions. We pray for those that are here today that need to come to Christ. Lord, they've seen the cost that it is to follow You. We have to lose our life to find You and to find our life. Grant them grace to see that losing whatever they lose in this world is nothing in comparison to the treasure of finding Christ. We pray this in His Name, Amen.

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