

JOHN 15:18-27 • NASB

“If the World Hates You...”

Series Review

John 15:1–11

The Vine and the Branches — abide in Christ, love one another

- Fruitfulness & Pruning
- The Command to Abide
- The Power of Abiding
- Loves as the Root of Abiding

"The True Vine — Abiding in Christ"

In John 15:1–11, Jesus uses the image of a vine and its branches to teach His disciples the essential nature of their relationship with Him. He declares Himself the true vine and His Father the vinedresser — the one who tends, prunes, and cultivates.

Series Review

John 15:12–17

The Greatest Love — Chosen as Friends

- The Command to Love
- From Servants to Friends
- Chosen and Appointed
- The Command Restated

*"The Greatest Love –
Chosen as Friends"*

In John 15:12–17, Jesus moves from the call to abide (vv.1–11) into the heart of what abiding looks like in practice: sacrificial, obedient love. This passage is one of the most intimate in all of John's Gospel, as Jesus redefines the disciples' relationship with Him — from servants to friends.

John 15:18-27

(18)“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.

(19)If you were of the world, the world would love you as 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 persecute you as well; if they followed My word, they will follow yours also.

(21)But all these things they will do to you on account of My name, 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)The one 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 this has happened so that the word that is written in their Law will be fulfilled: ‘THEY HATED ME FOR NO REASON.’

(26)“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, namely, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, He will testify about Me,

(27)and you are testifying as well, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

What We Learn, Verse by Verse

v.18–19

Don't be surprised if you're hated— you don't belong to the world.

v.20

You will be treated as your Master was treated.

v.21

Why, because the world does not know the Father.

v.22–24

The world has now seen and heard Jesus, so there is no hiding their sin. Rejecting Him is now a choice.

v.25

This hatred fulfills what is written in the Law (the Psalms).

v.26

The Helper — the Spirit of truth — will testify about Jesus.

v.27

You will testify also, having been with Him from the beginning.

John 15:18-27

Verse 17 ends with the commandment to love one another. Verse 18 begins with “If the world hates you...”

What is “The World”?

"The world" is a system organized independently from God, not necessarily our neighbors or even non-believers, but a system or government.

DISCUSSION

Why place a teaching on the world's hatred right after a teaching on love for one another?

Love inside the community and hostility from outside are two sides of the same coin — believers need each other to withstand a world that will not receive them as it did not receive Jesus.

Hated Because Not of the World

vv. 18–19

If the world hates you, remember it hated Jesus first.

Notice the punctuation, this is not a question, it is a statement. Jesus is not raising a possibility; He is preparing them for a certainty.

DISCUSSION

Why does the world hate believers, according to v. 19?

Because Jesus has chosen them out of the world. As Christians, we have a different system of values than does the world. We are called to be set apart, not isolated. Why?

The Servant and the Master

v. 20

Jesus recalls His earlier words (John 13:16): a servant is not greater than his master.

If they persecuted Jesus, they will persecute His followers too.

But if they kept His word, some will keep the disciples' word also — hostility is not the only outcome.

DISCUSSION

Why include the encouraging half of this verse — some will keep your word too?

Jesus balances the hard truth with real hope: some will reject the message, but some will respond well. Jesus reassures them because He knows what they will soon face. Essentially letting them know that their work will bear fruit.

They Do Not Know the Father

v. 21

All of this happens "because of My name" — because of who Jesus is and the disciples' connection to Him.

The root cause: the world doesn't really know the Father who sent Jesus.

At its core, rejecting Jesus is a spiritual problem, not just a social or political one

DISCUSSION

How does not knowing the Father lead to hatred of Jesus and His followers?

If you don't know God, you only value those things that you can see and what the world tells you is valuable.

Without Excuse

vv. 22–24

If Jesus had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin — but now they have no excuse.

The same is true of His works: having seen the works no one else did, and still hated both Him and the Father.

"Whoever hates Me hates My Father also" (v. 23) — affirming the unity of the Father and the Son.

DISCUSSION

What does this teach about seeing the truth clearly and being responsible for it?

The more clearly you've seen the truth, the more responsible you are for your response. This doesn't mean people were sinless before (Romans 3:23), but there is no excuse for rejecting Jesus after seeing Him.

Fulfilling What Is Written

v. 25

This hatred happens to fulfill what's written in Scripture: "They hated Me without a cause."

This points back to Old Testament passages like Psalm 35:19 and Psalm 69:4, where an innocent person is hated for no good reason.

Jesus' rejection isn't a sign His mission failed — it's exactly what God said would happen. It is further affirmation of God's sovereignty.

DISCUSSION

Why connect His rejection to Old Testament Scripture?

It reassures the disciples: what feels like tragedy and injustice is unfolding exactly as Scripture foretold. It also confirms Jesus as the prophesied righteous sufferer — strengthening confidence in Him even facing His death.

The Helper Will Testify

v. 26

Jesus promises to send the Helper (Greek *paraklētos* — Helper, Advocate, Counselor) from the Father.

The Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, will testify about Jesus.

DISCUSSION

What's significant about the titles "Helper" and "Spirit of truth" here?

"Helper" conveys one called alongside to support and comfort — vital as the disciples lose Jesus' physical presence and face hostility. "Spirit of truth" emphasizes His role confirming truth in a world full of rejection and lies.

You Will Testify Also

v. 27

Jesus tells the disciples they, too, will testify — because they have been with Him from the beginning.

Their testimony rests on firsthand experience.

The Spirit's testimony (v. 26) and the disciples' testimony (v. 27) work together — divine empowerment and human proclamation.

DISCUSSION

Why does this partnership between the Spirit and the disciples matter for the church's mission?

They compliment each other: the Spirit doesn't bypass human witnesses, and human witnesses don't testify effectively in their own strength. This pattern continues the church's mission (Acts 1:8 — power to witness through the Spirit).

Pulling the Passage Together

- 1 Getting pushback for your faith is normal! *vv. 18, 20*
- 2 Your relationship with Christ is what the world hates! *v. 19*
- 3 Rejecting Jesus is a deliberate choice, no excuse! *vv. 21–24*
- 4 Suffering for your faith isn't a sign of failure! *v. 25*
- 5 Believers never testify alone! *vv. 26–27*

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