

The Church of the Servant King

Survey of the Bible Series – The Gospel of John (SB_JN15C_Hatred of the World)

Introduction (Jn 15:18-25)

The few verses in this section of Scripture are packed with meaning. The concepts contained in this section of Jesus' instruction to His disciples are a major part of our basis for having developed and studied the cosmic system of thought and philosophy that is the means of Satan's dominion over the masses throughout human history. We have distinguished between the apathetic or indifferent attitude that characterizes the mindset of the person who has been consumed and distracted by the pursuit of all that the world has to offer (Cosmic 1) and the outright antagonistic and even hateful attitude that characterizes the mindset of the person who is opposed to Christ and His own in this world (Cosmic 2). Typically, Cosmic 2 is more characteristic of the thinking of certain unbelievers (some of whom are merely religious vs. spiritual) whereas Cosmic 1 could characterize the thinking of either an unbeliever or a believer. Nevertheless, it is possible for the believer to succumb to Cosmic 2 thought (see 2 Tim 2:11-13). Jesus' instruction to His disciples in these verses is focused upon the opposition His disciples could expect from those whose mindset was Cosmic 2 in orientation.

Analysis (Jn 15:18-25)

Friendship (15:15) with Christ will result in the believer having to endure the world's hatred. However, friendship with the world is to be God's enemy (Jas 4:4). Believer's who are truly seeking to live the spiritual life – maintain fellowship with Christ through a walk by the means of the Spirit in Truth – are instructed to expect the world's hostility (1 Pe 4:12-13).

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures [Cosmic 1 thinking]. Adulterers and adulteresses [believers who have rejected the love of their legitimate "spouse" – Christ]! *Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.* (Jas 4:1-4)

Beloved, *do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.* (1 Pe 4:12-13)

The "world" (v. 18) is the Greek word kosmos and it is used in several different ways in the Johannine literature of the New Testament:

- The material universe as the object of creation (1:10)
- Satan's system of priorities and thought focused upon the temporal (1 Jn 2:15-16)
- Mankind (and the earth) as the object of God's love and redemptive plan (3:16)
- The mass of unbelievers who are hostile to God's plan (Cosmic 2) as a result of succumbing to Satan's system of priorities and thought (15:18)

Jesus was hated from the time of His birth (Herod's attempt to kill Jesus) to His death. The source of that hatred in verse 18 is the "world." We can understand Jesus' use of the term "world" here to describe the mass of unbelievers who are hostile to God's plan as a result of having chosen to remain in the darkness of Satan's system of priorities and thought patterns.

Jesus' "choosing" (v. 19) of His disciples in this passage should be understood in conjunction with the context. The context (chapter 15) has a theme of encouragement to remain or abide in fellowship (communion) with Christ so that fruit (defined as love for each other) might be borne in the lives of the disciples. The purpose of Jesus' choice of the disciples is stated in verse 16 – "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." It was through the disciple's production of fruit, which could only occur if they remained in fellowship or communion with Christ, that their witness to the world would not be discarded as useless (15:6). The "choosing" in context is for service and it would require a stretch to develop this passage into a theology of election and predestination.

The choice of the disciples' to bear fruit (v. 16) guaranteed that their lives would have permanent value, but it did not guarantee immunity from Cosmic 2 hatred. The world does not "hate" the believer who has succumbed to Cosmic 1 or Cosmic 2 thinking and behavior. However, the believer who is pursuing friendship with Christ (v. 15) which is manifest by "love" for the brethren will be hated for his differences.

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles – when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, *speaking evil of you*. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. (1 Pe 4:1-5)

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Ro 12:2)

The basis for this hatred of believers is the willful ignorance of God on the part of the person in the Cosmic 2 system (v. 21). They would hate Jesus' disciples because of their affiliation with Jesus and His claims to be the Son of God. If they truly knew God, then they would have recognized Jesus for Who He was. To not know Jesus is to not know God.

One of the gates into the Cosmic 2 system of thought is arrogance of ignorance. Ignorance of God's revelation to man in the form of the written Word results in a void or vacuum of truth in the soul. Paul uses the Greek word *mataiototes* to describe this emptiness or void of truth in the soul.

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility *mataiototes* of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. (Eph 4:17-18)

This "ignorance" that is associated with a vacuum in the soul devoid of Truth acts almost as a black hole that literally sucks Satan's cosmic lie into the soul. The person so willfully ignorant of Truth becomes subject to even greater deception and misery. The person so arrogantly ignorant of Truth will reject Christ as the source of Truth from God the Father and will reject His claims to be the only way to the Father among other things. Paul describes the effects of the arrogance of willful ignorance upon early generations of the human race in the 1st chapter of Romans (see Romans 1:18-32).

The arrogance of ignorance will result in the destruction of a society and a nation (not to mention the spiritual life of the believer and the hope of eternal life for the unbeliever) as truth is

exchanged for Satan's lie. The principles of divine establishment in regard to the four divine institutions of volition, marriage, family and nation are rejected by those who are arrogantly ignorant. In their place are substituted a loss of personal freedom in the interest of the greater "good," laws that are detrimental to the institution of marriage and family, and laws, treaties and policies that compromise the sovereignty and strength of the national interests.

In the context of our passage, it is the arrogance of ignorance that is motivating the religious of Israel to reject Jesus as its Messiah in spite of all He had done to validate His claim. Although God's plan for Israel was and is different than any other nation, the ultimate effect was still the same – the loss of freedom and the destruction of the nation.

Jesus' statements in verse 22 that they would have had not been guilty of sin if He had not come must not be taken in an absolute or literal sense. The reason – it would be contrary to other passages to do so. For instance, consider the following passage:

And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me. (Jn 16:8-9) *[Jesus will not be present on earth during the period of which He spoke here, yet there is certainly a guilt associated with sin that is referred to here. There is no excuse for sin at any time, especially since Jesus has come.]*

The very basis of the world's hatred is the fact that Jesus exposes to the conscious mind of man the inner sinful nature and hypocrisy of man. An arrogance rooted in willful ignorance of Truth is the basis for the world's hatred of Jesus and His own. If men know Jesus, then they know God (v. 23). A man's understanding of God can be measured by his understanding of Jesus. Many people know some of the words of the Bible and may even know the Gospel message, so this ignorance is not always a result of not knowing some of the written words of the Bible (v. 24). Rather, this willful ignorance is tantamount to willful rejection.

The ironic thing about the Pharisees is that they were professed "champions" of the Law, yet they rejected the very man Who fulfilled prophecy concerning enemies of the servant of God (v. 25).

Those who hated me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they are mighty who would destroy me (Psa 69:4a)