

### Exegesis

**Vs. 20**– The Lord connects the topic of hate to his words on service (cf. 13:16). He says, “Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they [the people of the world] have persecuted me, they will also persecute you [the disciples] ...”. Just as there is *no ministration* to which the disciple is exempt because Jesus came as a servant, so there is *no tribulation* to which the disciple is exempt because Jesus came as a *suffering* servant (cf. Isa. 53). If Jesus served, so must his disciples serve; if he suffered, so must his disciples suffer (cf. Matt. 10:16-15; Mar. 13:9-13; 1 Pet. 4; 2 Tim. 3:12).

Every true believer is characterized by *two* things: *servicing* one another and being *hated* by the world. This was the pattern of Jesus' life; it will also be the pattern for the disciple's life. Not even Jesus' friends (cf. 15:15) can avoid Jesus' cross (cf. Mat. 16:24). If the world can no longer get at the One who commissioned the message, they will shoot its messengers. But even when they're after Christ's disciples, the world is, ultimately, still after Christ (cf. Ac. 9:4, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?").<sup>1</sup>

But take heart, persecution from the world will *not* be universal. The Lord says, "if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."<sup>2</sup> The assumption underpinning these words is that, while they will *definitely* have enemies, the disciples will also *undoubtedly* have friends. After all, despite the opposition, many still believed in the Lord (cf. 11:45), and so, in like manner, despite the opposition they'd receive from some, the disciples would find a favorable audience. As Jesus' sayings were "kept," so will the apostles' teachings be "kept."

**Vs. 21** – Moving back to persecution, the Lord says, "But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me." The world hates Christians because it hates Christ, which is, ultimately, a hate born from an *ignorance* of God. The disciples proved they already knew the Father because they already knew his Son (cf. 14:7); because of that knowledge, they will love God and their fellow man (cf. 11:34-35; 15:12-13). But because the world did not recognize the Son, it was clear that they did not know the Father either (cf.

---

<sup>1</sup> Klink (2016), p. 665.

<sup>2</sup> Carson (1991), p. 525-526, says that it is possible to understand these words as "If they persecuted me (and they did), they will persecute you also; if they obeyed my teaching (and they didn't), they will obey yours also (so of course they won't)." Hence NEB paraphrase "...they will follow your teaching as little as they have followed mine." However, he goes on to explain that, considering the crowds were divided over Jesus' message (cf. 12:44-50), it is more likely that a comparison is being made with the disciples' message. As it was for Jesus, persecution and reception are in store for the apostles. According to Köstenberger (2008), p. 465, this is the prevailing interpretation of this verse among "many major commentators."

1:10-11; 8:19; Lu. 23:34). As such, they will hate God and their fellow man, they will especially hate those who claim to know God (cf. 1 Jn. 2:9; 3:15; 4:20).

Christians become a punching bag for no other reason than that they have accepted the revelation of God via his Son. Non-believers assault believers because, though there is ample evidence, unbelievers *stubbornly* refuse to look at the facts. Much harm has been done in the world due to a lack of knowledge, but even *more* has been done by those who are *obstinate* towards truth (e.g., Those doctors who were resistant to Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis' proposal that they should wash their hands.).<sup>3</sup> It is bad enough that we make mistakes because we don't know better; it is considerably *worse* to make the same mistake when you, in fact, do know better. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." Thus, contrary to the saying, ignorance is *not* bliss; God's word, world history, and personal experience all attest to the destructive force of willful ignorance. To know God is to love life, but to ignore God when he is standing right before you is to "love death" (Pro. 8:36; cf. Hos. 4:6).

**Vs. 22-24** – Jesus explains, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father."

To be clear, when the Lord says, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin," he is not saying there was no sin before his arrival. The world was condemned *already* (cf. 3:17-18). What he meant was that his generation was particularly deserving of punishment because they were not only sinners by birth but by their explicit rejection and execution of God's only Son.<sup>4</sup> As Klink explains, "The true source and authority for the evaluation and condemnation of sin was not the law of Moses but the law of Christ."<sup>5</sup> The Lord's words here are like the passages where he compares Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum with the likes of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom (Mat. 11:20-24), and where he contrasts "this evil generation" with the likes of the queen of Sheba and the Ninevites (Lu. 11:31-32).<sup>6</sup> On judgment day, those latter

---

<sup>3</sup> Strohlic, Nina, "Wash your hands' was once controversial medical advice," March 6, 2020, *National Geographic*, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/handwashing-once-controversial-medical-advice#>, [accessed, January 30, 2024], explains that, though Semmelweis tried to demonstrate the harm that unwashed hands could have on patients (particularly women in labor) in the mid-1800's, it didn't become common practice until the 1870s, and, amazingly, "It wasn't until the 1980s that hand hygiene was officially incorporated into American health care with the first national hand hygiene guidelines."

<sup>4</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 466; Kruse (2017), p. 377, "This does not mean that they were not guilty of sin prior to witnessing what Jesus did; rather, it highlights the greater guilt involved in rejecting that revelation."

<sup>5</sup> Klink (2016), p. 666.

<sup>6</sup> Carson (1991), p. 526.

examples will fare much better than those who saw and heard Jesus firsthand but persisted in their unbelief. The Lord says he did "works which none other man did." In other words, his track record was undeniable; even a blind man could see that he was the Messiah (cf. 9:30-33).<sup>7</sup> But for all the good he did, it sadly fostered hatred in the hearts of those who refused to believe.

The world was resistant to the knowledge of God because such a revelation also brings with it *conviction*. The Lord's teaching removed the "cloak for their sin," so the world hated him. No one likes to be told they're a sinner, but it is especially unpleasant for those who, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, felt they were already righteous (cf. Lu. 18:9-14). With Jesus' arrival, even the super-religious were confronted with the possibility that they were not good enough to go to heaven. In fact, if a person were to have any hope of avoiding hell, their righteousness would've had to "exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees" (cf. Mat. 5:20). Such a thing was impossible. If the religious elites were not righteous enough, then no one was. Or, as Paul puts it, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). To get to heaven, a person would need the righteousness of another: *Jesus Christ*. Thus, the Lord acted like smelling salts to a sleeping world. Some became aware of their need for salvation and learned to love their Savior, while others turned over and went back to sleep, hating both the Father and Son for trying to wake them up.

**Vs. 25** – "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." Of all the times in the NT that an OT passage has been referenced, this is the longest of the introductions.<sup>8</sup> Such a lengthy preamble serves to heighten the importance of the scriptural reference. The passage that Jesus quotes is Psa. 69:4; and in it, David says, "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head...."<sup>9</sup> However much the world may protest, they do not have a leg to stand on. Whatever reasoning they might have for hating God, Christ, and Christian, is unsubstantiated and foolish. Humanity is without excuse.

That Jesus specifies that this is "*their* law" and not something like "*the* law" does not mean he is diminishing the importance of the OT (cf. 10:34). "Their law" is the Law, which is his Law and is, in actuality, him (cf. 1:1). Instead, the Lord is heightening the irony of his current situation. By hating Jesus, they've fulfilled the very law they claimed to know so well (cf. Lu. 11:52).<sup>10</sup> It's like

---

<sup>7</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 378.

<sup>8</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 466.

<sup>9</sup> Klink (2016), p. 667, "By using a psalm of a righteous sufferer who faces baseless accusation and persecution, Jesus not only fulfills that psalm by becoming the fullest expression of the righteous sufferer but also fulfills in his person the deliverance from such injustice."

<sup>10</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 378.

he's saying, "Isn't it ironic that the world hates me and my Father. After all, doesn't one of their messianic psalms say, 'They hated me without a cause'? It is as if this whole ordeal was foretold." But, make no mistake; even the evil machinations of evil men cannot thwart the well-laid plans of a sovereign God. The One who makes "known the end from the beginning" (Isa. 46:10) knows what may jeopardize his redemptive plan. But rather than avoid potential impediments, he uses them to accomplish his will (cf. Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28). God uses both the willing servant and the willfully ignorant.

## VIDEO DESCRIPTION

### **Deep Dive: The Gospel of John | Week 61 | John 15:20-25**

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

Last week, it was established that the hate directed toward Christians was because of Christ. The Lord chose the apostles, making them the world's enemies (cf. Jn. 15:19). Tonight, the Lord will explain where this hate comes from. After all, people have hated Jesus for generations; more than anyone else, he would know its origin.

Surprisingly, we'll learn that this hatred is born from nothing more complex than *willful* ignorance. The world has been exposed by the light of God's Son, and rather than step further into the light and be transformed by the light, they learn to hate the light and so seek to destroy the light. And so, since the world can no longer hide and since they refuse to repent, they have but one alternative: *hate both God the Father and God the Son*. If the willfully blind do not wish to see, they will do everything in their power to snuff out the Light, going so far as to persecute anyone who identifies with the Light.

But, make no mistake; even the evil machinations of evil men cannot thwart the well-laid plans of a sovereign God. The One who makes "known the end from the beginning" (Isa. 46:10) knows what may jeopardize his redemptive plan. But rather than avoid potential impediments, he uses them to accomplish his will (cf. Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28). God uses both the willing servant and the willfully ignorant.

**Pastor's manuscript can be found here:**

---

### **Grace Pointe Baptist Church**

12029 Eastern Ave.

Baltimore, MD 21220

**Contact:** [info@GracePointeLife.com](mailto:info@GracePointeLife.com)

**Website:** <https://www.gracepointelife.com>

**Give:** <https://www.gracepointelife.com/give/>

Podcast Details:

Season 1 | 60