

Hatred Unmasked

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[0 : 00] Well good morning friends, let me add my welcome to you along with Matt and everybody else who's been up the front here this evening, it was morning even, it's not night time yet. Keep your Bibles open there but also grab your bulletins and I just want to point out something to you, there's an outline for you there but also we'll be doing a different sort of reflection time this morning and you'll see it down there connecting today so we'll just get ready for that when Matt brings it to us at the end of this morning. Now let's pray. Our Father in heaven, thanks for your word, please help us to understand it rightly and have courage to believe it and so be prepared to live in your world for your glory. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

Well I'm not sure what you thought Christianity was when you first signed up to become a Christian and I'm not sure what you expect normal Christianity to be like now. It is wonderful, right? It is wonderful to be a Christian, one of Jesus' friends. I mean we have great and precious promises maybe just talk to the person next to you and tell them what the good thing about being a Christian is, right? There's got to be heaps. So tell the people around about you what the good thing about being a Christian is. Just for 30 seconds because it is great.

Okay, yell them out, come on couple, yell them out, loud and clear. Okay, over here, hope, yeah? Do I have someone to raise me on hope? Brenton? Peace, yeah, somebody else? Sin forgiven, yes. Heaven, we're going to glory, yeah.

Access to the Father, yeah. Anything else? Church family. Heirs to the throne of glory, yes. Heirs of all the promises of God, yeah. It is fantastic being a Christian, right?

We have a love from the Father and we know that we'll never be forsaken. We've got the new family. We know what the Creator is doing. We've been told we're friends of God because we know where the world's going.

[2 : 09] It's a good thing to be a fellow Christian. We have family, worldwide family. Anywhere you go in the world, you can meet with people who are part of our family.

I mean, even if you come from Canberra back to Brisbane, your family's still here. It's fantastic. Don't go to Canberra again. But I'm pretty sure that whatever you expected of what it meant to be a Christian, a disciple of the Lord Jesus, most of us in this room have probably got it wrong in one area.

And as good as glorious as it is, this world is not our home. It's not.

Jesus promises that his disciples will not be loved by the people in this world. Jesus promises that the disciples are actually going to be hated by those who hate him.

That's what God wants us to hear this morning in John chapter 15. Now, earlier in John chapter 15, Jesus urged the disciples to remain in him, in the vine, close to him.

[3 : 27] The true people of God, as Jesus himself was, stick close in Jesus, stay connected to him. And you do that by keeping his word.

And as you do that, we will bear fruit, which demonstrates that we're in the vine. The fruit of righteousness and justice and patience and mercy and perseverance. And the big thing has been love, right?

The big thing in John 15 has been love. Jesus has been teaching this all the way through. Love which demonstrates being willing to lay down your life and the other disciples of Jesus.

You see it there in John chapter 15. Come back with John chapter 15. You see it there. Chapter 15, verse 12. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. See, love is death. That's what love is. Setting aside your rights for the sake of others.

[4 : 32] And that's what he's been teaching his disciples. And Jesus told them that he's the only way to the Father. No one comes to the Father except by him, back in chapter 14, verse 6. And the only way to get into the kingdom is by trusting Jesus.

He's going to have to die. And then he's going to be buried. And then he's going to be raised from the dead. And he's going to ascend to glory and bear much fruit. And so that all who trust in his death will have eternal life.

Now his death is just hours away. Now it's imminent in the scheme of things. And now he teaches them what his life will be like for them as they remain in him.

And the bottom line, life will not be easy for the disciple of Jesus. One of the prime ministers of old said life wasn't meant to be easy. But I think he got it from Jesus for the disciples.

Being a disciple of Jesus won't necessarily make life easier. Right? Being a disciple of Jesus won't make life easier.

[5 : 36] At times, it will actually make life harder. In fact, the world will hate you.

And we'll see why the world hates him. There's four reasons why the world hates him. We'll hate the disciples. And we'll pick it up here. We'll work our way through the passage. The world will hate you. Well, first reason, because it hates Jesus. Verse 18. If the world hates you, better say, the world hates you. The world will hate you. That's going to be a fact.

Right? First, because it hates Jesus. Before it hates you. How do you see that happening? Well, they want to kill him, don't they?

They're out for his blood. But let's just back up the track a bit and just think about our world we're today in. When 50,000 people walk across the Sydney Harbour Bridge, when thousands, including the Prime Minister of Australia, parade down Oxford Street, all celebrating with pride and without shame, that the world of homosexuality and promiscuity and immorality is good and wholesome, when people advocate to get rid of our life.

[6 : 57] When people advocate to get rid of RI in schools, particularly in Queensland now, when the government legislates for same-sex marriage, we see clearly that the world, made up of the people who live in it, who work and play with us, hate Jesus.

Which is why Jesus has said just in a previous breath, it's so important for the disciples to love each other. Back in verse 17, These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

Because the world won't, the world won't love us, won't love each other, believers, the world will hate the disciples, will hate us.

And if you hate those who love Jesus, then you are of the world. If you hate those who love Jesus, you are of the world.

Hate is a strong word. It means detest. It means reject. The world hated Jesus and has hated Jesus ever since he came.

[8 : 19] It hates Jesus because it hates his rule. It hates submitting to authority. I want to be the one in authority. Thank you very much. The world in John's Gospel is everyone who is opposed to the kingdom of God, the rule of God, where man tries to make the rules and overrule God's authority.

The world is the domain of darkness. It is the area of death and confusion and hostility and autonomy. That is the world. And we can see it in the absurdity of the rise of the sovereign citizen who drive on the roads but fail to recognise the rule of those who established and made the roads, who live in the state and enjoy the privileges of the state but fail to recognise the role of the state, who give them everything good to live in.

And so the absurdity of people who live in the world that God made and want to be the sovereign citizens in independence against God and fail to submit to his rule.

No, no. The world will hate you. No, that hated him, Jesus first. Secondly, because importantly, you don't belong to the world. See there in verse 19, the world hates the disciples because we have been chosen out of the world.

The world is not their home. They do not belong to it anymore. They no longer fit into the paradigm of this world.

[9 : 53] They're square pegs in a round hole. You don't belong in the world. They belong in the next. We belong in the next, the new age. Jesus is now our Lord.

We worship the true and living God, not the things of this world. We have a value system that is now transformed from the things and the values of this world.

Now, it's very easy to go along and live in this world and be loved by the world. Just don't critique. Don't be different. Don't call people to change.

Don't call people to repent. Don't just plunge in with it. Go along with it. Join the flow. Join the crowd. It's easy. The disciples can't be friends of the world and a friend of Jesus at the same time. You just can't. Can't do it. They cannot agree with the world and then speak against the world at the same time. It's a non sequitur.

[10:59] See, you can't compromise on biblical truth and then try to win the world to the truth because you don't belong to the world and you've got to call people out of the world who are going to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Self-censorship will not aid the cause of gospel preaching and kingdom progressing. For it begins by selling out on Jesus in the first place.

I mean, the strategy of some denominations is to endorse the immorality of same-sex marriage with the goal of winning those over to be their friends and then bless them when they come into their building by the leaders of the church.

But that's antithetical to what Jesus is teaching, surely. It's not calling people out of the world to repentance and faith and submission to Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Now, if you don't endorse the values of the world, if you don't approve, well, then the world will hate you. If you're saying that you don't agree what the world is doing, then there's nothing worse in this age than saying that someone is doing wrong.

[12:39] If you do, the world will hate you. The world will hate you because you belong in another world. You don't belong in this one.

Brothers and sisters, there'll be people in our families who hate you because you side with Jesus. You don't belong in this world.

You've been called out of this world. Thirdly, you be hated because they persecuted Jesus. You see the promise there in verse 20. Remember the word that I said to you, a servant is no greater than his master.

If they persecuted me, they'll also persecute you. If they kept my word, they'll also keep yours. As Jesus said, no servant is greater than his master.

We pick it up back in chapter 13 verse 16. We're not going to be treated any better. We can't be expected to be treated any better than our master. For we will speak the same word that Jesus spoke.

[13:53] We will have the same ideals and morality that Jesus had. We'll have the same priorities that Jesus has. The disciples should expect to be treated no better than Jesus, their master.

And in doing so, you see the response. Some people will persecute you, me, for that. Some, though, we see the great hope, will actually receive that word and hear what you say and pay attention if you call out of the world and join the same.

We're told, as Matt said, that anyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. Now, godly means a gospel-focused life, not just a good life.

I mean, if you live a good life, a healthy life and help people, that's a wonderful thing. You're not going to get persecuted for that. You'll get persecuted because you're on about the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the godly life.

And a life that sides with the gospel of Jesus being Lord will put you at odds with the world. Why? Well, because we see here that the world is evil and it doesn't like having the light shine on and expose our deeds or the deeds for what they are.

[15:20] I mean, why did countless Christians perish under the Neronian persecution? Because Christians wouldn't give up on Jesus.

Because Christians wouldn't worship Caesar. Why did countless Christians die in the Cultural Revolution in China? Because they wouldn't give up on Jesus.

They wouldn't deny Jesus as their Lord. Why did countless Christians die under Pol Pot in Cambodia? Because they wouldn't worship the state.

They would stay faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ. Why are believers being butchered in Nigeria today? The stats are that one Christian is being killed every two hours in Nigeria today.

So before we finish our gathering, two of our brothers or sisters would have been killed for following the Lord Jesus Christ. Because they will not recount their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[16:31] In living for Jesus we can expect opposition and even expect persecution. Christians to lose jobs and livelihoods in Australia because they will stay loyal to Jesus and not compromise their stand, standing firm in him.

I can see a time when Christian doctors, executives, board members, teachers, students, will be hunted out of their professions and their workplaces because of their loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew chapter 5 verse 11, blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad because great is your reward in heaven for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

So, so far the world will hate you, the disciples, because it hated Jesus first. It will hate you, it will hate disciples because we don't belong in the world.

Thirdly, it will hate you, hate the disciples because it persecuted Jesus and we're not greater than Jesus. And finally, the world will hate the disciples because the world does not know the father.

[18:04] See the universe is 21 and 25. They will treat you this way because they don't know the one who sent them. They do not know the father. They do not know his ways, they do not know where he's going, they do not know his plans and purposes for this world.

They do not know the father's will. They don't get what Jesus has been teaching them all throughout. And he hasn't been, they don't get what he's been teaching them throughout the hundreds and hundreds of years throughout the Old Testament.

leading up to this coming of Jesus, they just don't get it. Verse 22, however, you see, the world has no excuse for hating Jesus now that he's come.

He's spoken to them. Can't get any better than that, verse 22. He's done miracles amongst them, signs to demonstrate who he is and how powerful he is in verse 24.

And just like we read about the towns in Tyre and Sidon, are going to be worse off than Sodom and Gomorrah. We read about that in Matthew chapter 11. If Jesus had done what he'd done in their towns, in their time, then they would have repented.

[19:19] Or Nineveh, that wicked city of old. They came off better because when they heard Jonah tell them about the judgment to come, the people of Nineveh repented, put on sackcloth and ashes and repented and God spared them.

But these people who hate the Lord Jesus Christ without reason, no excuse for their sin. And in rejecting Jesus, in hating Jesus, they're actually hating the Father, verse 24.

for what more can he do for them but send his own Son to reveal himself to them. They do not know the Father and so they've hated Jesus without reason. It picks up Psalm 69, in hating David, the King of Israel, the Messiah of Israel for no reason, we anticipate that the world will then reject the King of Israel without reason.

The world had no reason to do that and every reason to submit. And if the Jewish leaders' estimation of Jesus was right, well they should have killed Jesus, right?

That he was just a man, he wasn't the Christ, he was just a phony, then Jesus would have rightly deserved his death, been guilty of the blasphemy in the highest degree, do him in.

[20:42] However, if they had really known the Father, they would have really received the Son and recognised who he really is, the Christ, the King, the Giver of Life, God the Son, Jesus, and worshipped him.

I mean, Paul, who was formerly Saul, is the classic example, the Pharisee of Pharisees, didn't recognise Jesus, hated Jesus, until Jesus confronted him.

brought him off his horse, brought him to his knees to recognise that Jesus is the Christ and then sent him off to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

And then what happened to Saul, Paul? Persecution and suffering followed him everywhere he went. But despite all that, he kept preaching.

And despite all these promises, the disciples are told to keep going on speaking for Jesus, bearing witness. And you see the promise of the Spirit.

[21:57] When the Helper comes, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me and you also will bear witness because you have been with me from the beginning.

Despite the promised hardship, Jesus may not stick around physically to be with them, to comfort them, but the Paraclete, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth will come and help.

The Spirit that is sent by Jesus from the Father will reside with and in the believer. And because the Spirit of Jesus is in them, the world will go on to hate them. the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Truth will testify, bear witness about Jesus.

He will speak the truth of Jesus through the scriptures. He will declare the truth of Jesus through the disciples and disciples are going to bear witness.

[23 : 05] You see there in verse 27. I've got to back up the truck a bit on this one, bearing witness. witness. The bearing of witness is the idea of being called to give evidence in a court.

That's the idea of bearing witness. As a witness it's usually called to speak when there's some kind of controversy, when there's some kind of issue going on. The truth of the matter is being disputed. So, the word bear witness here is going to witness that Jesus, they're going to testify that Jesus did die, that Jesus did rise again.

They're going to testify, they're going to bear witness that Jesus is Lord. Jesus is the way, the truth, and life. He's the only way, truth, and life to the Father.

No one comes to the Father but by him. That Jesus is the one who will judge the living and the dead. And that Jesus is the fulfilment of all the Old Testament was looking forward to and pointing to.

[24 : 07] And so the Spirit empowered disciples of Jesus are going to be changed by the Holy Spirit. They'll be changed from being cowards to being confident, clear, courageous preachers of the Lord Jesus Christ, co-workers of God.

And they're going to be empowered and enlightened by the Spirit to endure the hostility to come prior to the Spirit coming. You know that Peter was a coward denying the Lord Jesus three times. But when the Spirit comes in Acts chapter 2, he's willing to bear witness and to suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ. At almost every turn we go in the book of Acts, as the gospel goes ahead, you see that persecution comes upon believers.

But the power of the Spirit enables them to continue to bear witness in hostile situations. And when they're thrown out of one town, they get up and they go to the next.

The very word we have for witness is the very word we get the word martyr from. You become a martyr for Jesus as you martyrio, as you bear witness for him in a hostile world.

[25 : 37] And so hatred is promised, you see here in chapter 16 verses 1 to 4. Don't be surprised. It should come as no surprise for the disciple that the world will hate them.

That is the right expectation for the disciple of the Lord Jesus to have. You can't expect the world to love them. That, brothers and sisters, is abnormal Christianity.

And I think that we have been living through an abnormal period of history which is coming to an end. The default position for the world will be to hate the disciple.

Jesus told the disciples all this so they won't go astray, so they won't be scandalised, they won't stumble when this happens.

When life gets extraordinarily, excruciatingly difficult for them, when the world hates them, persecutes them, they'll be able to stand firm because it won't be a surprise.

[26 : 51] It'll be expected. So when they're in prison, being flogged, facing execution by sword or crucifixion, they'll stand firm and they will not stumble, they will not be ashamed because of our allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In fact, you see there in verse 2, their fellow Jews will drive them out of the synagogue, the places of worship, worship, and the hour.

It's poignant, isn't it? The hour is coming. Whenever whoever kills you does what they do, they will think that they're offering a service to God.

It's exactly what Saul was doing. And that time, that hour came. All the apostles, except John, died for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, at the hands of wicked men.

Why will these things happen? Because the rulers of the synagogue, the Jewish leaders, did not know the Father or the Son, because they bear witness about Jesus and the world, saying that Jesus is Lord and Saviour, and that those who would not submit to Jesus Lord and Saviour, will be guilty and judged by him for their sin.

[28 : 18] for that's why he came, to die, to rise again, to be exalted as judge, to be Lord and Saviour. It should be no surprise to us then that the disciple of Jesus suffers at the hands of religious men who actually belong to the world as well.

No surprise that persecution comes even from within. in the 16th century, Mr.

Cramner was burnt at the stake by religious men, those who claimed to be protecting the truth. And preachers of the word were barred from preaching in their churches and they had to go and preach outside their churches.

faith. And faithful Anglicans in Brisbane today are being forced to leave their buildings by bishops who are supposed to be defenders of the faith.

So knowing what Jesus has told the disciples, it helps us not to be ashamed of Jesus and not to be ashamed of those who were martyred for him.

[29 : 32] We see what normal Christianity is. Peter and Paul were heroes of the faith for dying for the Lord Jesus. I mean, and then what does the rest of the Testament say?

Well, that's the time to come but just highlight a couple of verses. Philippians 3, verse 20, we've been called out of the world, our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a saviour from there. To Timothy 3, verse 12, servants like their master be persecuted. Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 1 Peter chapter 4, writing to believers, doing it tough. Peter tells them in verse 12, the apostle Peter tells them, who is God speaking through him, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering as though something strange were happening to you but rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

Normal Christianity for the disciple and the believer is this, a wonderful hope, great friendship with God, joy in believing, love amongst the family of believers, the great hope of heaven, the forgiveness of sins and heart.

[30 : 50] Hatred will vary in different degrees but often be focused on the leader. But it's important to remember when you're hated without cause for the name of Jesus, it's what Jesus said will happen.

And finally, if you haven't been persecuted for Jesus yet, don't worry, it'll come someday.

Forewarned, forearmed, let's pray. our Father in heaven, we thank you for the truth of your word.

We thank you for the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus.

And we cry out for our country, our fellow believers in this land, that we would stand firm with you, despite the hardship that we endure and will endure.

And we cry out for leaders in our church denominations around the world, that they would stand firm for the Lord Jesus Christ and repent where appropriate.

[32 : 09] And we pray for the countless brothers and sisters around the world today who are suffering for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Please help them to stand firm, knowing and looking forward to the great joy to come.

Lord, we pray that we might be counted worthy to stand alongside them. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. We ask it in Jesus' name. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.