

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 10-7-12 AM NOTES
"WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU EXPECTING?"
JOHN 15:18-16:4
#62 in Series, "Verse-by-Verse Through John"

John 1:10b (NKJV) "...the world was made through Him..."

John 3:16a (NKJV) "For God so loved the world..."

1 John 2:15-16 (NKJV) "¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world."

1 John 2:16b (NIV) "...the boasting of what he has and does..."

2 Timothy 4:10a (NKJV) "for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world..."

2 Peter 2:20b (NKJV) "...the pollutions of the world..."

2 Corinthians 4:4b (ESV) "...the god of this world..."

John 12:31b (NKJV) "...the ruler of this world..."

1 John 5:19b (NIV) "...the whole world is under the control of the evil one."

Romans 12:2a (NKJV) "And do not be conformed to this world..."

I. The Reaction to Expect From the World (15:18-25)

John 14:6 (NKJV) "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

A. Intolerance (15:18-20)

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (NKJV) "³ You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴ No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier."

"[Jesus Christ] was 'despised and rejected of men.' If then the purest love that was ever manifested on earth, if goodness incarnate was hated by men in general, if the brighter His love shown, the fiercer was the enmity which it met with in response, then how can we expect to be admired and esteemed by the world?"

—Arthur Pink

1 Corinthians 16:14 (NKJV) "Let all *that you do* be done with love."

Luke 6:26a (NKJV) "Woe to you when all men speak well of you..."

*Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause, or blush to speak His name?
Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize, and sailed through bloody seas?
Are there no foes for me to face? Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace, to help me on to God?
Sure I must fight if I would reign; increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, supported by Thy Word.*
—Isaac Watts (1724)

B. Ignorance (15:21)

C. Indictment (15:22-25)

John 3:18 (NKJV) “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

II. The Response to Expect From Disciples (15:26-27)

A. Receive the Witness of the Spirit (15:26)

B. Reach Out With Witness to the World (15:27)

1 Corinthians 3:9a (HCSB) “For we are God’s co-workers.”

III. The Reasons the Lord Warns Us What to Expect (16:1-4)

A. That We Do Not Stumble (16:1-3)

B. That We Will Not Be Startled (16:4)

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"WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU EXPECTING?"
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Let me review the context of today's passage. It is the night before Jesus was crucified. It has finally sunk in on His disciples that He is leaving them. The disciples are distraught. In chapter 13 Jesus tells them and shows them His love for them. In chapter 14 Jesus gives them some tremendous promises that we still take comfort in today. He promised that He was going to prepare a place for them and He would one day return to take them there. He then promised to send them His Spirit to not just be with them, but to dwell in them. Jesus also promised to give them His peace. In chapter 15, Jesus told His disciples that they would bear fruit and more fruit and much fruit if they would abide in Him. In that abiding, they would also know His joy as His eternal life flowed through them. In verse 14 of John 15, Jesus amazingly called them His "friends". That brings us up to today's text. In John 15 beginning with verse 18, Jesus' instructions to His disciples take on a very sober tone as He warns them that as His friends they would receive the same treatment that He did from the world. They needed to understand that their life as Jesus' disciples was not going to be blissful and easy; it was going to be filled with rejection and even persecution from the world system in which they lived until the time they left planet earth to go to that place He had prepared for them. This warning to His disciples almost 2,000 years ago still applies to us. Often preachers, zealous evangelists and well meaning Christian witnesses get the advantages of being Christ's disciple out of balance with the cost of being His disciple. Jesus never held anything back. He warned them exactly what they would be facing if they followed Him. As the world hated Him, the world would also hate them. We are often guilty of making the life of following Christ seem like all blessings and no buffeting, all triumph and no trials, and all pleasure with no persecution. One of the reasons that Jesus emphasized our love for one another and a focus on the wonderful place He is preparing for us after a few years here is because His disciples will experience the rejection and the persecution in their years here. Look at the contrast by reading 15:17 & 18 together.

In the beginning of this passage, Jesus talks about the world over and over (the word "world" is used 6 times in verses 18, 19). It is vital that we understand what the word "world" refers to when it is used in a negative sense as it is in this passage. Jesus was not talking about the created world as He was in **John 1:10 (NKJV)** "...the world was made through Him..." Neither was He talking about the world of people as He was in **John 3:16 (NKJV)** "For God so loved the world..." When the word "world" is used in a negative sense, it refers not to a place but an organized system of values, views and philosophies. Let's look at some passages that speak of this "world" that Jesus says will hate His disciples. **1 John 2:15-16 (NKJV)** "¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world." This is a description of the values in the world. The word translated "lust" is a strong compelling desire. It is much broader than just the sexual. The lust of the flesh is the strong desire to have that which is forbidden by God. The world values the pleasures of what God calls sin. The lust of the eyes is the inordinate desire to have the pleasing things that we see. The pride of life is the desire to impress with our possessions or accomplishments. The NIV translates "the pride of life" in **1 John 2:16b (NIV)** "...the boasting of what he has and does..." The world values the things God hates, desires what we see and thus is never content with what we have, and longs to impress others with what we have and do. **2 Timothy 4:10a (NKJV)** "for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world..." The world (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) lures believers away from faithful service. **2 Peter 2:20 (NKJV)** "...the pollutions of the world..." The world is polluted and pollutes all those who accept its values. The world has Satan as its "value setter". In **2 Corinthians 4:4a (ESV)** Satan is called "the god of this world..." In **John 12:31b (NKJV)** he is called "...the ruler of this world..." **1 John 5:19b (NIV)** "...the whole world is under the control of the evil one." If we think of the world as a value system, Satan is the one who puts the price tags on things. As you can guess, Satan

values the things that God puts little or no value on and considers the things that God values as worthless. Let me give you a few examples. God values truth while the world denies that there is universal truth and values what it calls tolerance. God values human life. From the moment of conception He views human life as sacred; the world values the “quality of life” of the mother and the baby. That sounds good, but the world arbitrarily determines what “quality” is and usually it relates to comfort of the parents. God values humility – a life of surrender and dependence on Him, while the world values pride and dependence on no one except one’s self. We could go on and on with more examples, but you get the idea. It is the people who have accepted the values of Satan and have attached themselves to a system that he controls who will hate the disciples of Jesus Christ and oppose them in all that they do. This is what Jesus is warning His disciples of in this passage. The disciple of Jesus Christ and the world are heading in different directions, operating under a different set of orders, and they cherish different allegiances. That spells conflict!

I. The Reaction to Expect from the World (15:18-25)

The world does not react against mere professors of Christ (which describes the majority of professing Christians in America). The world reacts to those who truly are His disciples and live in obedience to the one who redeemed them. Not only does the world not persecute and hate these who profess Christ but do not follow Him as Lord, the world embraces them. As long as we keep what we believe as just personal to us and don’t tell anybody else they are wrong, the world doesn’t care at all. The problem comes when a disciple of Christ starts actually believing what Jesus said such as in **John 14:6 (NKJV)** “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” The world hated Jesus when He said that 2,000 years ago and they will hate His followers who say it today! Three words summarize what true disciples of Christ can expect from the world.

A. Intolerance (15:18-20)

The word “hates” in verse 18 is in what is called the perfect tense. That refers to something that started in the past and continues through the present into the future. It is the sense of “The world has, does and always will hate the true disciple of Jesus Christ.” The god of this world (Satan) hates to lose anyone and because Jesus chose us out of the world, Satan hates us. We need to understand that basic truth. Satan is a real being and he always has and always will hate every true disciple of Jesus Christ. All of his actions toward us are motivated by his hatred for us. No matter how enticing his lies may seem, remember that they come from a being who vehemently hates us. This world system (which has Satan as its god, its ruler) values **conformity** above all of its other values. The world is geared up to entice and even try to force every person to conform to its values. Let me point out an example of that. Let’s look at the issue of homosexual marriage. This is one of the main values that the world is promoting right now. Everywhere we turn, we are being bombarded with the message to conform to the world’s value that this behavior which the Bible calls sin is in reality no big deal and just a matter of equality and personal preference. We are bombarded with this by celebrities in every realm (sports stars, movie stars, politicians, and even some otherwise conservative talk show hosts). Anyone who says, “No, homosexuality is a sin” [along with heterosexual sex outside marriage] is labeled as intolerant, a bigot, cruel, etc. Notice how the world responded to the President of Chic-fil-A when in an interview he said that anyone is welcome to eat in their restaurants, but their company stood for biblical family values of which homosexual marriage is not one. You would have thought he had committed a crime worthy of death! The world lashed out and even said and did unreasonable and irrational things. The world demands conformity and anyone who does not conform will pay a price. Our command from the Lord is **Romans 12:2a (NKJV)** “And do not be conformed to this world...” That is a formula for constant conflict! A true disciple of Christ realizes that we are in a conflict and expects nothing else. The Scriptures remind us over and over that we are soldiers in a war and we are told in **2 Timothy 2:3-4 (NKJV)** “³ You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴ No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.”

In verse 20, Jesus reminds us that, “A servant is not greater than his master”. If He truly is our master, if we have surrendered to His lordship, then the world will treat us like it treated Him. Arthur Pink said it

well: “[Jesus Christ] was ‘despised and rejected of men’. If then the purest love that was ever manifested on earth, if goodness incarnate was hated by men in general, if the brighter His love shown, the fiercer was the enmity which it met with in response, then how can *we* expect to be admired and esteemed by the world?” [Arthur Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*, Page 27]. Should we feel that something is wrong if the world accepts us or just ignores us? Yes, I think we should. We are to as **1 Corinthians 16:14 (NKJV)** says to “Let all *that you do* be done with love.” We are not to be unkind and obnoxious, but we are to be plain and unrelenting in proclaiming the truth of God’s Word. Jesus said in **Luke 6:26a (NKJV)** “Woe to you when all men speak well of you...” When everything goes smoothly in our life, it doesn’t necessarily mean that our lives are pleasing to Him. I am deeply challenged by these words from the hymn writer Isaac Watts in 1724:

*Am I a soldier of the cross, A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause, Or blush to speak His name?
Must I be carried to the skies On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize, And sailed through bloody seas?
Are there no foes for me to face? Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace, To help me on to God?
Sure I must fight if I would reign; Increase my courage Lord!
I’ll bear the toil, endure the pain, Supported by Thy Word.*

- Isaac Watts (1724)

B. Ignorance (15:21)

When I use the word “ignorance”, I am not using it in the sense of an IQ deficiency. The world is ignorant of God. The religious leaders of Jesus’ day that would in a few hours take His life, prided themselves in knowing all about God, but Jesus said that they were ignorant of God. The god that the world speaks of and believes in is a god they have made that they are comfortable with. The one true God has revealed Himself in the Bible. We cannot truly experientially know this one true God except through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We come to Christ only in an awareness of our spiritual poverty and by repentance of sin and savingly believing on Him and His finished work at Calvary on our behalf. The world has rejected the God revealed in Scripture and thus they are ignorant of the true God.

C. Indictment (15:22-25)

In verse 22, Jesus is not saying that the world would have been sinless since we are all sinners because we are descendents of Adam and partakers of the consequences of his sin. Jesus is speaking of the ultimate sin for which there is no forgiveness – a final rejection of Him and His payment for sin. The ultimate condemning sin is to willfully reject the only cure for sin! **John 3:18 (NKJV)** “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” Since the Son and the Father are one (John 10:30), verse 23 says that the world’s hatred for Christ and rejecting Him is also hatred of and rejection of the Father.

Those who rejected Jesus had no excuse. In verse 24, He reminds them of the works He did that no one else did and still He was rejected. Verse 25 speaks of the fact that not only did they reject Him, they hated Him. Now they are without excuse and without hope. Would it be any different if Jesus had come for the first time in our day? As Jesus would expose sin and hypocrisy even in religious leaders, I have no doubt that the world would reject Him if He came for the first time today.

The indictment of the world is that they have rejected the only one who can deliver them from their sin and the consequences of their sin. The world does not politely reject Him; the world hates Him.

II. The Response to Expect from Disciples (15:26-27)

What is the response of a true disciple of Jesus Christ to the world system that hates us?

A. Receive the Witness of the Spirit (15:26)

The Helper is the Holy Spirit. Is it possible for anyone to be saved out of a system that has Satan as its ruler and god? Is it possible for any whose eyes are blinded to the truth to see the truth and come to Christ? Yes! Every saved person in this room was in that condition because that is the default condition of

every descendent of Adam. People will not be delivered out of the kingdom of darkness by our slick presentation of the truth or our powerful logic and persuasion skills. It happens only by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. Oh, what an encouragement this verse is to true disciples of Jesus Christ who have been commanded by Him to make disciples from every tongue and tribe and people and nation. Only the Spirit of Christ can give sight to blinded eyes and do a supernatural convincing work in the heart of an unbeliever who is a captive of Satan's kingdom of darkness. Do we have any part in this work?

B. Reach Out with Witness to the World (15:27)

The Holy Spirit witnesses and we witness. This is the primary application of **1 Corinthians 3:9a (HCSB)** "For we are God's co-workers." We need to be reminded that those in the world are not our enemy. They are captives of our enemy. Evangelism is setting the captives free! We go to those without Christ next door and on distant continents. We go as clean vessels filled with the Holy Spirit and we share the message of our God centered gospel. As we share, the Holy Spirit is at work giving witness to the truth of the Scriptures, opening their blinded mind to see the truth. Apart from this work of the Spirit, the lost (whatever their IQ) would not comprehend. Unless the Holy Spirit does a work, the truths of Scripture will seem as foolish to the lost who are captives of the world system (1 Corinthians 2:14). The reformers called this the internal witness of the Spirit. Oh what glorious truth: as we witness to the truth of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit witnesses to its truth and convicts of sin. I am not saying that we see the final result of that every time we share the Gospel. Sometimes this is a process and sometimes people under conviction respond in hateful ways, but we simply keep praying, sharing and trusting God the Spirit (our "co-worker") to do the convincing and convicting work that only He can do. That is our response to the world's hatred – not anger, not protests, not arguments of human logic, but the witness of the Gospel.

III. The Reasons the Lord Warns Us What to Expect (16:1-4)

There are two reasons that the Lord has given His disciples warnings.

A. That We Do Not Stumble (16:1-3)

The church has generally done a horrible job of warning new Christians what to expect from the world once they start following Christ. Often the world's rejection (sometimes even their own family) catches them off guard and they stumble. That word translated "stumble" means to be offended. It is the Greek word we get "scandalized" from. Often those in the world react with anger, indifference, ridicule, or even outright persecution. The reason those in the world react this way is because they do not know God (V3).

B. That We Will Not Be Startled (16:4)

When we know that it will come, we are not taken off guard and can respond in a Christ like way – returning good for evil, forgiving them for they know not what they do, and recognizing that they are not our enemy but are prisoners of the enemy.

CONCLUSION

What in the world are you expecting? Is your life sufficiently different from the world that they even recognize that you are not of them? When we talk like the world, dress in immodest ways like the world, are consumed with material things and trivial things like sports like the world, the world assumes we are still one of them. You can avoid rejection and harassment and certainly persecution by just conforming to the world in outward ways and being quiet about the truth. One day, this world system will pass away (1 John 2:17) and we will give an account to the one who died for us. Will there be any scars from the battle down here or will you have to plead guilty of collaboration with the enemy?