

## Hated Because of Jesus' Mission



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) September 17, 2020

Jesus tells the church, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:10-12).

Why does the world hate the true church, its pastors and parishioners? A true Christian is loving, peaceful, forgiving and caring. Those who obey Jesus' words are self-sacrificing, meek and kind.

Common wisdom tells us that it isn't natural to hate those who love you, bless you and pray for you. So, why are Christians so hated? Jesus says simply, "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you ... If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:18, 20).

The church, ministers and believers are hated because of their mission, which is much more than telling lost people, "Jesus loves you." You may draw back in surprise when reminded of what our mission is. Simply put, as Christians we are to take back from the ungodly what is most precious to them: self-righteousness. It is to translate them into a freedom they think is slavery.

Jesus said, "I chose you out of the world" (John 15:19). This strikes at the very heart of why we are hated. When we were saved, we got "out of the world" and accepted our mission to insist that others also "get out of the world."

"You are not of the world ... therefore the world hates you" (15:19). Christ is saying, in essence, "The world hates you because I called you out of your condition. And that means I called you out of their fellowship. Yet, I didn't just call you out, I then sent you to call everyone else out."

Here's an encouraging word, though. Even though the world hates and persecutes Christ's true disciples, we find a growing love and godly affection among the members of his church. Indeed, as the world around us grows increasingly chaotic, the incredible love of our fellow believers grows more precious.

As Christ said, "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

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