

101. The hatred of the world

November 26, 2017

What I am about to show you might be a very disturbing and gruesome image of one of our sisters in the Lord who was persecuted for her faith in Christ Jesus. If you can stomach it, look at her precious face. But if you don't want to see it, you may close your eyes for a minute or so. I will let you know when the image is gone. If you have your children with you in here and you don't want them to see this image, you may cover their eyes as well.

Her name is Yubelina Hgato from a small Christian village in Indonesia. In 2001, her village was attacked by anti-Christian muslim people. Yubelina was badly injured during the attack. As she tried to run away from her attackers, she spilled a kerosene lamp that ignited and burned her face badly. Please change the slide.

Yubelina still bears the scars of her ordeal, not only on her face but also in her heart. Her husband left her, and she now supports her two children by working on her brother's farm. Every time a stranger gasps or recoils at her face, every time her daughter comes home in tears because someone called her mom a 'monster,' Yubelina's suffering is renewed.

The Voice of Martyrs Ministry helped her receive multiple plastic surgeries and even provided her a small concrete block house in her brother's town. Do you know what she said? "After the incident when I was burned and when my husband left, there was so much misery and suffering. But I received blessings from the Lord. I believe God has a plan for me," said Yubelina.

This is not an isolated case of persecution against Christianity. From the 20th century to this date, Christians have been persecuted by Muslim and Hindu groups, and by atheistic countries such as Russia, China, Cuba, and North Korea. Here is the map of the restricted nations against Christianity around the world.

As of now, as estimated by another Christian missionary organization, 322 Christians are killed for their faith in Jesus Christ each month; 214 churches and Christian properties are destroyed; 772 forms of violence are committed against Christians, such as beatings, abductions, rapes, arrests, and forced marriages EACH MONTH.

Some of you may think, "That happens only in the Third World countries, but not here in the United States of America." To that kind of naive thinking, I must ask, "Where have you been from 2009 till January 22nd, 2017?" Obama administration was spearheading all the denouncements and denials of Christianity in public places with the help from the ACLU, liberal media, Hollywood activists, the Democrat Party, the Planned Parenthood, Home Depot, General Electric, and the wealthy billionaires, like Warren Buffett and George Soros, of course behind all of these, satan himself.

From TVs in living rooms, from elementary school classrooms to boardrooms of Corporate America, to conference rooms of local, state, and federal governments, satanic influences have penetrated everywhere. We are living in an anti-Christian world without a doubt.

Jesus is not teaching anything new. He told His disciples many times about the persecutions they were going to face. They just didn't pay any attention to His teachings

because they were busy bickering about the highest and popular position they all wanted to have like many Christians today.

A. THE WORLD THAT HATES YOU

I am sure that by now you've noticed that today's teaching is going to be more political than regular Bible study. At the same time, you also know that I don't make a habit of bringing in political comments unless the texts we study have relevancy to some of the political issues we are facing.

Jesus is teaching His disciples and us here about the upcoming persecutions against Christianity. Instead of covering this portion of Scripture in sequential order, I am going to categorize them for your easier understanding. So please stay with me.

Our Lord had been talking about love previously, but now He is talking about hatred from the world against them as well as us. Actually, Jesus used the word 'hate' 7 times in this short section from v18 to v25.

We need to clarify the definition of the 'world' mentioned here. The Greek word for the 'world' is 'kosmos.' In Scripture, we find at least three different ways:

1) The created world

John 1:10a He was in the world, and the world was made through Him

2) The world of humanity

John 3:16a For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son

3) The society that blatantly opposes or pretends to standing neutral to God

We sometimes use the phrase "the world system" to define this special meaning. V18 is the case in point.

As Christians, we must be careful not to love the world or be conformed to the world.

1 John 2:15-17 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. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Why does the world system, including the religious world hate the born-again Christians who believe in Jesus Christ and seek to follow Him? Jesus has several reasons:

1) We identified with Christ

John 15:18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

John 15:20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

The world does not worship Jesus, nor does it follow His commandments because God's Word goes against what they want to do. We who follow His commandments are the living and constant reminders of God to them. It is no wonder why they hate us. If with all of His greatness and perfection and miracles, Jesus does not escape persecution, what hope is there for us with our imperfection?

2) We do not belong to the world

John 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

When we trusted Christ, we moved into a new spiritual position: we are now “in Christ” and “out of the world.” This does not mean that we should isolate ourselves within a walled Christian community away from the rest of the world. I am sure that you all have heard a really dumb phrase: “so heavenly minded that he is no earthly good.” Rather, we should look at the things of earth from God’s point of view. Then, we would even despise our own sins just as the Lord does.

Jesus said this to the Father in His prayer while He was on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane:

John 17:15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

The world system does not like any defector. As long as a person follows the fads and fashions, and follows along their guidelines, the world doesn’t care. But when a Christian refuses to be conformed to the world, because he became a new creation in Christ Jesus, it no longer wants him, nor loves him. As a matter of fact, the world system starts to unleash its ungodly fury against that Christian.

We are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. This carnal world does not want the light of God that exposes their dark side, nor do they want salt in their decaying and rotting societies.

Socialism is one of the perfect tools to make its people into the same mold – in their ideology, everyone is equal; there should not be anyone who is too rich or poor. Whether you work hard or are lazy, you get paid the same amount. If you are rich, the government will take your money away from you to give a portion of it to the poor and the government will keep the rest. Of course, the ones who are in control are the exceptions. They get to keep their wealth and comfort above everyone else because they are supposed to be untouchable. Does that sound familiar to you?

Here is a tremendous book you must read, “When a nation forgets God” by Pastor Erwin Lutzer, the Senior Pastor of Moody Church in Chicago, Illinois whom I greatly respect. In his book he exposes seven trends that transformed a society much like our own into Nazi Germany. I wholeheartedly agree with Dr. Lutzer. By the way, Nazism is the common short form name of National Socialism.

It seems that the majority of people in America were spellbound by the rhetoric of false hope and change by Barack Hussein Obama and the Democrat cohorts during the 2008 and 2012 Presidential campaigns. Some people still are not awakened from their nightmare to see the truth. Most recently the Justice Department settled two lawsuits with 469 conservative groups that claimed the Obama administration’s IRS had unfairly scrutinized them during applications for tax-exempt status.

Please don’t think that I am one of those die-hard Republicans who badmouths about everything the Democrats do. I am not. Though I am a registered Republican, I disagree with many unbiblical and lame things they do. In my opinion, many of them are spineless politicians who could care less about doing what is right at all cost as long as they get to have that power, fame, and money.

3) The world is spiritually ignorant and blind

John 15:21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

John 16:1-3 "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. 3 And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

If you had asked the religious rulers in Jerusalem if they knew the God they were seeking to defend, they would have said, "Of course, we know Him! Israel has known the true God for centuries!" The religious rulers knew a great deal about Jehovah God and could quote chapters and verses to defend their doctrines, but they did not personally know God as you see in v3 of chapter 16.

Nothing much has changed since the First Century. Our Missionary Alex Piagetti of "For the Children" Ministry in Brazil not only faces the people who are in utter poverty, drugs, child prostitution, gambling, pornography, and alcoholism, but they also receive ugly resistances from Catholics and Protestants who are more than willing to fight against them because he is in their territory.

A friend of mine, Pastor Craig Roters of Calvary Chapel Oro Valley used to be the Youth Pastor of a liberal church before he started a Calvary Chapel in Oro Valley. He was fired from his position by the board of directors of the church because he was teaching the Word of God and too much Jesus to the young people who consequently got saved left and right and their parents, too. This was not good for their liberal church agenda. He had to go, so they dumped him.

The religious world today claims to know God, but it does not want to bow the knee to Jesus Christ as one true God and the only Savior of the world. Satan has blinded their minds and sin has blinded their hearts. Like Saul of Tarsus, they are so convinced that their "religion" and "doing-good-things-once-in-awhile" are good enough for God that in the name of their religion they persecute God's people!

4) The world will not be honest about its own sin

John 15:22-24 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates Me hates My Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

Throughout the Bible, the Lord makes it very clear to us that humans have no excuse for their sins. Though all of the evidence had been presented, they were not honest enough to receive it and repent of their sins because they loved their sins.

The American people even have less excuses. They have heard the truth, but they choose to ignore the truth. Maybe they are thinking that if they ignore the truth long enough, God would say, "Alright. I will compromise." You know the Greek word for that, right? "Hogwash!"

B. HOW TO FIGHT WITHIN THE CARNAL WORLD

John 15:25-27 But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.' 26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

How does the Holy Spirit encourage believers when they are experiencing the hatred and opposition of the world? It is primarily through the Word of God.

Until the Lord Jesus returns, or until we die, we must live in this hostile world and face opposition against our Christianity continuously. How can we do it? What is the secret of our victory? It is the presence and power of the Spirit of the Living God within us. Remember, without Him we can do NOTHING.

C. APPLICATIONS

1) As born-again Christians, we can expect persecutions by this carnal world. Stay true to the Word of God.

2) One compromise with the world by us is one step further away from the Lord, one step closer to self-destruction.