

# "When the World Hates You"

## John 15: 16-6:1

5/29/22

### Discussion Guide

Before you begin, take a moment to thank God for the kids in your life and pray for their safety. Then pray for all the parents who lost their kids in the shooting that took place in Uvalde, TX. Pray for the kids still in the hospital.

*<sup>18</sup> "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. <sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. <sup>21</sup> They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me. <sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup> Whoever hates me hates my Father as well. <sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. <sup>25</sup> But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'*

*<sup>26</sup> "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. <sup>27</sup> And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.*

**16** *<sup>1</sup> "All this I have told you so that you will not fall away.*

1. The shooting in Uvalde, Texas reminded me of the first school massacre I hear of: Columbine. The shooters specifically searched for athletes, minorities and Christians. Before they shot one of their victims, they asked: "Do you believe in Jesus?" If they said "Yes" they would immediately shoot the person without saying a word.

Why do people feel that Christians are their enemy? Has anyone ever persecuted you or disliked you just because of your faith in Jesus? Did it shock you? How did you respond?

2. If you were an outsider to the faith at one time, how did you view Christianity? How did you view Christians? Was there something about either that you disliked or towards which you had animosity?
3. As an insider of the faith, how do you view Jesus and Christianity? Knowing the good it will do people, are you surprised that people have objections to the faith? Do you think most people are objecting to the faith or to how Christians talk or behave, or to the way Christians have applied their faith politically and socially?
4. From what you've heard, what beefs do people have with Christianity, not with Christians, but with the faith itself?
5. The Apostle Paul made an emphatic statement: *"In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."* 2 Timothy 3:12 In the Parable of the Soils (Matthew 13) Jesus

said one of the things that can take a Christian out is persecution. Passages that talk about the End Times all note that one of the signs that Jesus' return is soon is a period of intense persecution of the Church. As a Christian, knowing all this, I've often asked myself the question: *"If persecution actually broke out in the United States would I remain faithful to Jesus or would I fall away?"* Reflect on that question. Are you prepared to be persecuted for your faith? What are things we can do to be prepared in case we are persecuted for our faith?

6. Jesus mentions three areas from which conflict would arise between the Church and the world:  
1) The authoritativeness of Jesus' teaching. 2) God's ownership of believers. 3) The message that the world is sick and we, Christians have THE cure. Talk about each one.
7. In every age, specific teachings in the Bible have been attacked. Those attacks have changed over time as culture has changed. When I was a kid, people attacked creationism, the existence of God, and miracles. What teachings in the Bible are being challenged today? How should we respond to those attacks? Do you think there will be an outbreak of persecution as a result of the growing animosity towards the Church's teachings in these areas?
8. I'm embarrassed to admit this, but when I was a teenager I was addicted to Barry Manalo's songs. I had every album he cut and listened to his music way too much. I gave him way too much influence over my life. At a youth retreat, the speaker challenged us to break our ties with secular music, Hollywood movies, and anything competed for our time and obedience to God. I fought with myself long and hard and came to the conclusion that I had to break all my Barry Manalo records. And I did. My friends thought I was crazy. Looking back, I agree, it was a foolish thing to do, but at the time it was an expression of my devotion to God.

What have you done to express to God that he owns you and not \_\_\_\_\_. Have you ever had to give up something or pair back on something because it was competing for your heart and devotion to God?

9. I remember the song by Andre Crouch, *"Jesus is the Answer."* The first line was: *"Jesus is the answer for the world today. Above Him theirs' no other, Jesus is the way."* As an insider, I agree. He was and still is the answer I needed. Not everyone feels that way though. What can we do to help people on the outside discover the truthfulness of that message?
10. Do you think people view God as a loving God or a wrathful Judge today? Do people grasp the love that God has for them? How did you hear about the love God? How have you expressed the love of God to others?
11. Do you think people see Christianity as a grace-based faith or as a works-based religion?
12. What are ways we can testify to others about Jesus that are effective? What ways of testifying that aren't as effective today as they used to be?