

John 15:18 – 16:4a

1. Do you think Christians are persecuted in North America? Why or why not?

Read John 15:18 – 16:4a

2. Jesus speaks in this text about a number of causes of the persecution of his followers. In vs. 19 he speaks of how his disciple's primary allegiance will be to him, the world doesn't own them, they are his own, they don't love the world they love him. If our primary allegiance is to Christ, others won't be able to trust our allegiance to them, to the party, to the company, to the family. In what ways does the Christian's primary allegiance to Christ lead to affliction? Lead to conflict with others?
3. (20) "*If they kept my word, they will also keep yours*". It seems Jesus says this a little tongue in cheek. They rejected Jesus' word, it stands to reason then that they will also reject his word through his followers. Why was Jesus' message rejected? In what ways do we see his word rejected in his followers today?
4. (21- 25) "*All of these things they will do to you on account of my name*". The word name in scripture means character. As Jesus' word and character revealed people's sin and they hated him for it, so if we speak his words and live out his character we to will expose sin and be hated for it. In what ways have you seen this to be the case? Why does the exposure of sin lead to affliction?

5. (16:1) Jesus is warning us of these things so that we won't "fall away". In Gk this word means to be scandalized, and gives the picture of tripping over something that we don't expect sending our lives, our faith, our mission tumbling down. What do you think would happen to our lives of faith if we weren't aware that persecution was inevitable when we are connected to Christ? How does it change your view of God to know that this kind of affliction is part and parcel of what it means to follow him?

6. (15:26) How will the Spirit help the follower of Jesus in the midst of persecution?

7. (16:2-4a) Jesus refers to the disciples time of affliction as their "hour". This is a key word in John that Jesus uses to refer to the hour of his affliction, his death on a cross for us. He seems to be pointing his followers in their hour to consider his hour. How does it help us face affliction to consider his hour in the midst of our hour?

8. At the beginning of the sermon Tim summarized Jesus' main point in that, persecution, rejection, hatred, is inevitable if we are connected to Christ. In other words if we are not experiencing these things it means that we may not be following Jesus rightly, consistently, or perhaps actively hiding it. Would you agree? Why or why not?