

# SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

## WEEK THIRTY-THREE: JESUS EXPLAINS HATE

### READING

18 “If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. 19 The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. 20 Do you remember what I told you? ‘A slave is not greater than the master.’ Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you. 21 They will do all this to you because of me, for they have rejected the one who sent me. 22 They would not be guilty if I had not come and spoken to them. But now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Anyone who hates me also hates my Father. 24 If I hadn’t done such miraculous signs among them that no one else could do, they would not be guilty. But as it is, they have seen everything I did, yet they still hate me and my Father. 25 This fulfills what is written in their Scriptures: ‘They hated me without cause.’ John 15 (NLT)

### TEACHING

Hate is a strong word. If you are a kid, you’ve probably been told by a parent not to say you hate something or someone because that word has so much power in it – the power to hurt others. In this passage, Jesus explains that we should not be surprised when the world hates people who love and follow Jesus. When Jesus speaks of “the world,” he is talking about the values, priorities, and desires of an evil rebellious system. Jesus isn’t saying that every person in the world who isn’t a Christian should or will hate you. Christians should have great friends who don’t believe the same as them. When we use our belief as a weapon to make others hate us, we don’t have the heart of Jesus. He was often found in the company of those far from God. Jesus knew how to love people different than him while also living a life that invited them to something better. The goal is not to be hated, but Jesus said it will happen. Why?

Every human heart wants to rule itself – be its own king. It’s in our nature to rebel; we don’t want someone else telling us how we should live or setting the rules for us. And Jesus came not just to be our friend and our savior, but also to be our lord and our king. Without experiencing the goodness and grace of God, we will always hate the idea of Jesus as king. And people who hate Jesus as king will often hate his people.

The amazing thing is that Jesus gave his life for those people who hated him. He even prayed for the very people who crucified him. And we should do the same – pray for those who hate us. Don’t defeat hate with hate. Overcome evil with good.

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## RESPONSE

### OPENING QUESTION(S):

- Is there a food that you hate? Which one?

### TODDLERS/PRE-K:

- What powerful word did we learn about today?
- How did Jesus respond to people who hurt him?

### CHILDREN:

- What did Jesus mean when he said the world would hate his followers?
- Why don't people like the idea of Jesus as king?
- How did Jesus respond to people who hated and hurt him?

### TEENAGERS:

- Why don't people like the idea of Jesus as king?
- What did Jesus pray for those who hurt him?
- Where do we find the strength to respond in love to people who hate and hurt us?

### ADULTS:

- In what ways are you embracing the values of God's kingdom that could cause the world to hate you?
- How does your life reflect the kingship of Jesus in ways it didn't a year ago?

## PRAYER

*God, thank you that you don't hate us. Thank you that you love us. And thank you that even when we hated you, you didn't give up on loving us. The Bible says that while we were still your enemies, Jesus gave his life for us. Jesus, thank you for enduring such hardship and hatred. Thank you for doing it in our place. Help me to not respond to hate with hate. Help me to overcome evil with good. Give me the grace and strength to love those who are different than me. Remind me in those moments of how you loved me when I was far from you. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## NEXT LEVEL (ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL TEACHING)

Here Jesus says that he chose his disciples to come out of the world. Sometimes Christians interpret this to mean we should isolate ourselves from interaction with non-Christians and that holiness is about separation FROM something. While holiness does include separation from certain things, it also is about being set apart FOR something – for Jesus and his mission. Read John 17:13-15 to better understand what Jesus has in mind for his followers' role in the world.