Living for Christ in a Fallen World

John 15:18—16:4
The Health & Wealth Gospel

• “If you give your life to Jesus, if you walk in obedience to him, all in your life will be a blessing. He will take all your problems and fill your life with joy and happiness. You will have blessing upon blessing. Just surrender yourself to him and follow expectantly.”
John 15:18-21

“‘If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 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 also keep yours. But all these things they will do to you on ...’”
John 15:21-25

• “account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me ...’”
John 15:25—16:3

• “‘without a cause.’ But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do ...’”
John 16:3-4a

• “these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.” (ESV)
Change of Direction

• **John 13**—Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and told them, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another.”

• **John 14**—“Let not your hearts be troubled” and “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.”

• **John 15**—“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me ... bears much fruit.”
Hate (miseō)

- Hate, detest, abhor
Opposition Is Inevitable

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you” (15:18)
The Influence of the Church

- Hospitals
- Universities
- Literacy
- Education
- Capitalism
- Free enterprise
- Representative gov’t
- Separation of political powers
- Civil liberties
- Abolition of slavery
- Modern science
- Benevolence
- Higher standards of justice
- High regard for human life
- Codifying & setting to writing most world languages
- Development of art & music
- Inspiration of the greatest literary works
- Lives transformed from liabilities to assets
- Eternal salvation of countless souls
The Influence of Christ

• Is there anyone who really thinks that the world would be a better place without the charity, hospitality, and morality of Christianity? Is there anyone who really thinks that the world would be a better place without Christ and his church?
Compassion of Jesus in the Gospels

- Healed the sick
- Cleansed the leper
- Ministered to the multitudes
- Set those in spiritual bondage free
- Spoke of love and forgiveness
- Loved the little children
- Spoke up for the oppressed
- Gave hope to the weary
Compassion of Jesus in John

• John 4—To the Samaritan woman
• John 4—Healing the official’s son
• John 5—Healing the lame man
• John 6—Feeding the 5,000
• John 8—Forgiving the woman caught in adultery
• John 9—Healing the man born blind
• John 11—Raising Lazarus from the dead
2 Timothy 3:12

- “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (ESV)
Opposition May Be Terrible

“They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God” (16:1-2)
Hebrews 11:35-37

“Some were tortured, refusing to accept release ... Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated.”

(ESV)
Examples of Persecution

• **Nov 2014 in Iran:** Pastor Saeed Abedini remains in Iran’s most brutal prison.

• **Nov 2014 in Egypt:** between 20 and 30 Christians are kidnapped each month in an attempt to convert as many as possible to Islam.

• **Nov 4, 2014 in Pakistan:** A man and his pregnant wife are beaten and burned because of rumors that they were Christian.

• **July 2014 in Iraq:** ISIS drove out more than 100,000 Christians in the area of Mosul.

• **2014 in Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya:** Christians routinely abducted and executed.
Currently

- Most experts suggest that there are 200 million Christians worldwide who suffer severe persecution (*prison or penalty of death*) for their faith, with as many as 400 million more who face moderate persecution (*hardship/bad treatment/discrimination*) for being a Christian.
In two thirds of the world (in terms of population) it is illegal to be a Christian.
“So much popular Western evangelical religiousity is so shallow and selfish. It promises so much and demands so little. It offers success, personal happiness, peace of mind, material prosperity; but it hardly speaks of repentance, sacrifice, self-denial, holy lifestyle and willingness to die for Christ.” —Peter Kusmic
Opposition Is Endurable

“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.” (15:26)
It is endurable because …

• We have the Holy Spirit
  – “The Helper” *(paraklētos)*
    • The one called alongside
    • The helper, advocate, counselor, comforter
It is endurable because …

• We have the Holy Spirit

• In the midst of it we experience the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings
  
  – “That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”  

(Phil 3:10, ESV)
It is endurable because ...

- We have the Holy Spirit
- In the midst of it we experience the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings
- It confirms that we belong to Christ
  
  — “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”  

  (Matt 5:11-12)
It is endurable because …

• We have the Holy Spirit
• In the midst of it we experience the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings
• It confirms that we belong to Christ
• Our sufferings will be worth it
  – “For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” (2 Cor 4:17-18, ESV)
God’s Promises

- Life to the full *(Jn 10:10)*
- The Holy Spirit *(Acts 2:38)* & his fruit growing in us *(Gal 5:22-23)*
- Forgiveness of sins *(Acts 2:38)* & the gift of eternal life *(Jn 3:16)*
- A ministry for God *(Eph 4:11-12)*
- To be with us to the end *(Mt 28:20)*
- To work in all that happens to help us be more like Jesus *(Rom 8:28; Phil 1:6)*
God’s Promises

• Power to live for him *(Eph 1:19-20)*

• Wisdom & truth *(Jam 1:5; Jn 17:17)*

• To meet our needs *(Phil 4:19)*

• A reward for faithfulness *(Gal 6:7-9)*

• Renewal & refreshment *(2 Cor 4:16-18)*

• Persecution *(2 Tim 3:12)*

  – “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” *(ESV)*
Living for Christ in a Fallen World

“It will be worth it all when we see Jesus, life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ; one glimpse of His dear face all sorrow will erase, so bravely run the race till we see Christ.”

—Esther K. Rusthoi