

## A TIME IS COMING: “OF LOVE AND HATE”

**THESIS:** Counteract The Hate

**TEXT:** John 15:17—16:4

**OPEN:** What do you think of my former home church preacher Jeff Whitlock’s quote at a Johnson Bible College homecoming & preaching rally in the ‘90s: “There’s coming a time when there will be two types of people—even among churches—those who believe the Bible is God’s Word and those who do not.”

In **John 15:17—16:11** let’s discover in living for the Lord the love from Him to overcome hate from the world in a time that is coming and has now come. Why does the world hate Christians and the church? How does God help us when we experience it and what are we to do?

- Counteract the hate from the world by loving Jesus, Christians, and church even our enemies.

**John 15:17** “*This is My command: Love (Greek: *agapao*) each other.*”

Love commanded? “How can you command feelings?” someone may wonder. Love (Greek: *phileo*), of which we learned from last week’s message may include affection or emotional connection, but at its Christ-like core is an act of the will, hence, the commandment to love one another by Jesus.

**Love** (Greek: *agapao*) means unselfish, loyal, and devoted charity. It’s the supreme kind of love that seeks the greatest good of its object. Agape love indicates a selfless concern for the well-being of others that is not necessarily called forth by any quality in the person loved. Agape love is more than affection. It’s an act of the will, a deliberate choice.

In our 40 Days of Prayer ministry campaign we had in the “Praying the Scripture” section each day the command of Jesus to “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you” (*Luke 6:27-28*). It’s harder to hate someone when you’re praying for them. We also prayed the Scripture such as “your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing” (*2 Thes 1:3*).

**Insight from John Maxwell:** “Have you discovered the amazing truth that your actions tremendously impact your feelings? The way you act can change the way you feel. If you haven’t discovered that, it’s one of the most exciting discoveries of your life. People in relationship problems may say, ‘I don’t love him/her. What’s wrong with me?’ The answer to this problem is—begin to act like you love them. The response to this is usually, ‘Act like I love them? How can I act like I love them when I don’t feel like I love them?’ Sometimes we get the cart before the horse. The way you act can change the way you feel. When you begin to act in kindness toward somebody it can change the way you feel about them. Here’s God’s Word about how to do that: 1 Corinthians 13 ‘Love always protects’—even though I feel like abandoning you, I will protect our love. That’s the action. ‘Love always trusts’—even though I feel like hating you, I will learn to trust you. ‘Love always honors’—even though I feel like there is no future, I’ll look forward to a future with you. ‘Love always perseveres’—even though I want to run and hide, I’m going to stick through this with you. Love can act its way into a brand new feeling” (*One Hour With God* devotional book).

**Quote from Ralph Earle:** “The man who thinks loving thoughts about his wife will experience loving feelings toward her” (*New Testament Word Meanings*).

**John 15:9-12** “As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love. If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father’s commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.” God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ deserve our love and loyalty.

*Insight from John MacArthur, Jr:* “The person who truly loves the Lord with all his heart and soul and mind demonstrates his love by meditating on God’s glory (Ps 18:1-3), trusting in God’s power (Ps 31:23), seeking fellowship with God (Ps 63:1-8), loving God’s Word (Ps 119:165), being sensitive to how God feels (Ps 69:9), loving what God loves (Ps 119:72), loving whom God loves (1 Jhn 5:1), hating what God hates (Ps 97:10), grieving over sin (Mtt 26:75), rejecting the world (1 Jhn 2:15), longing to be with Christ (2 Tim 4:8) and obeying God wholeheartedly” (*The MacArthur NT Commentary, Matthew 16-23*, p. 340).

**John 15:18-21, 23** “*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 the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed My teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of My name, for they do not know the One who sent Me...He who hates Me hates My Father as well.*”

**World** (Greek: *kosmos*) means world system. “World” or *kosmos* referring to the present condition of human affairs, in alienation from and opposition to God” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*, p. 233).

**Hate** (Greek: *miseo*) means to detest with malicious and unjustifiable feelings toward others.

Why does the world or world system hate Christians and the church?

\*The world or world system hates Jesus and His Word first and foremost. **John 3:19-21** “This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”

\*The world or world system hates Jesus and His Word and thus the followers of Christ. **2 Timothy 3:12-13** “Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”

\*The world or world system hates Jesus, His Word, and the church because we do not belong to the world. **James 4:4** “You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world (or world system) is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”

\*The world or world system hates Jesus, His Word, Christians, and the church because they do not know God and thus really don’t believe in Him much less follow or represent Him. **John 16:2** “*They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.*”

**Illustration:** A modern day example of this is Islamic jihad—what they call “holy war.” What a misnomer! Here are more examples of hatred for Jesus and His church from *gatestoneinstitute.com* (06/28/20): “According to a May 14<sup>th</sup> report: ‘In Nigeria militant Fulani herdsmen and Boko Haram have intensified their anti-Christian violence with hacking to death in the past five months no fewer than 620 defenseless Christians. The atrocities against Christians have gone unchecked and risen to an alarming peak with the country's security forces and politicians looking the other way or colluding with the Jihadists. Houses burnt or destroyed during the period are in their hundreds as well as dozens of Christian worship and learning centers.’ Earlier this year, Christian Solidarity International issued a ‘Genocide Warning for Christians in Nigeria’ in response to the ‘rising tide of violence directed against Nigerian Christians and others classified as ‘infidels’ by Islamist militants.’ Here in America, riots in Portland include the burning of Bibles.

***John 16:3 “They will do such things because they have not known the Father or Me.”***

**Know/known** (Greek: *oida/ginosko*) means to realize, recognize, or understand.

\*When the world or the world system hates you because of your commitment to Christ and church remember it's not your fault nor that of Jesus. It's on those who hate unless they repent. *John 15:18, 22-25; 16:4 “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first...<sup>22</sup>If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup>He who hates Me hates My Father as well. <sup>24</sup>If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, 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>16:4</sup>I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you.”*

**CLOSE:** Counteract the hate from the world by loving Jesus, Christians, and church—yes, even our enemies.