

(18) “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 you on account of My name, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

(22) “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 without a cause.’

(26) “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.

(1) “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 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.”

Think on these things:

- 1) Why, if you choose to believe in Jesus, might you begin to have problems with people you have known for years (vs.18-19a)? What does Jesus say He did with us that causes us to be hated by others (v.19b)?

Why possible problems? _____

What has Jesus done with us? _____

- 2) Believing in Jesus and living obediently to Him, there are times you will be terribly uncomfortable thinking and acting differently than the people (and friends) around you. Can you share a situation like this that you’ve experienced?

- 3) Jesus clarifies why people may support our (new) position in life or oppose and persecute us. What reason is given in vs.20-21?

4) At what point do people become accountable for their sins (vs.22, 24)? See Romans 2:14-16.

5) Why were the Jews of Israel particularly condemned by Jesus on this night (vs.22-24)?

6) The Holy Spirit doesn't testify about Himself, but about Jesus (v.26). What should a Christian testimony be about, and why should believers share them (v.27)? See also John 3:27-30, 16:14a, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 1:27-28, and 1 Peter 3:15.

What should a testimony be about? _____

Why bother sharing them? _____

7) Does knowing in advance that something is going to be very hard for you make it any easier to face? Explain and/or share an example.

8) American Christians do not face deathly persecutions...at this time! Do you see any signs that the attitude towards Christians is changing in our culture, that we might be viewed as "enemies" to the state? If yes, can you cite a few examples please?

People and situations I want to pray for this week: