

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

Part XXXVIII: Trusting In Christ For His Gracious Edification Of True Believers, John 14-17

G. Trusting In Christ For His Edifying Insights On Persecution For Righteousness' Sake

(John 15:18-16:4)

I. Introduction

- A. John's Gospel claims that Jesus' disciples had received of His fullness "grace for grace" (KJV), the "constant reception of one evidence of God's grace replacing another," John 1:16; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 273.
- B. This truth is clarified in Christ's John 15:18-16:4 edifying insight on persecution for righteousness:

II. Trusting In Christ For His Edifying Insights On Persecution For Righteousness' Sake, John 15:18-16:4.

- A. In *stunning* CONTRAST to His John 15:9-17 promise of *fulfilling* spiritual *fellowship* with **God** and **other believers**, Jesus in John 15:18 revealed that in relation to the **world**, His followers would face *hatred*.
- B. This truth often shocks believers, so Christ's teaching on it in John 15:19-16:4 offers edifying orientation:
1. First, Jesus explained the core relationship dynamics that cause the world to hate the believer, John 15:19:
 - a. Christ revealed he has chosen the believer to be "out of, separate from" (*ek*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 391; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 233-236) the world system, John 15:19c.
 - b. Thus, the world cannot love him because it loves only those who are part of its system, John 15:19a.
 - c. Since the believer is thus foreign to and so threatening to its system, the world hates him, John 15:19b.
 2. Second, Jesus said that since His disciples were not greater than He was, people would react to believers like they reacted to Him, with some persecuting them and others heeding their words, John 15:20.
 3. Third, Christ said that the distinction between the lost world on the one hand and the believer and Christ on the other hand is rooted in the world's alienation from the Father: the world does not know the Father Who sent Jesus, so it does not know or fellowship with Him or with those who trust in Him, John 15:21.
 4. Fourth, the issue that alienates the world from God is His exposure of the world's sin, John 15:22-25:
 - a. Jesus explained that if He had not come and spoken unto lost world, it would not have guilt over its sin, John 15:22a KJV, NIV. However, now that Christ's words have exposed and defined the world's sin as sin, the world has no "valid excuse" (*prophasis*, *Ibid.*, p. 729-730) for its sin, John 15:22b.
 - b. With its sin undeniably exposed, the world is left with guilt, and must either alleviate its guilt, which it cannot do without God (Romans 3:20), or it must hate the entity that has left it with guilt -- to hate Christ!
 - c. If Christ represents the Father in coming to earth to expose its sin, the world hates God and Christ for no just cause as foretold in the Old Testament! (John 15:23-25; Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Psa. 69:4)
 5. Fifth, to enable the believer to face a sinful and thus a hostile world and still testify of the truth that leads it to hate the believer, Christ said He would send the Holy Spirit, the "Helper" (*parakletos*, *Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 392; Theol. Dict. N. T., v. V, p. 804), One like Jesus Himself (our earlier lesson in this series on John 14:16a), Who would come from the Father to equip believers to testify of the truth, John 15:26-27.
 6. Sixth, Jesus spoke these truths to believers lest they "take offense" (*skandalizo*, *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, p. 760) at Him in being surprised that they faced persecution for Him, John 16:1.
 7. Seventh, indeed, Jesus shared that even religious people would excommunicate upright believers and kill them in the misguided belief that they were serving God for doing so, John 16:2 with 1 Timothy 1:13.
 8. Eighth, however, the believer was to recall that these extreme persecution experiences would occur essentially because those who opposed the believer knew neither the Father nor Christ, John 16:3.
 9. Ninth, Jesus wanted believers to recall these orienting truths He gave on facing persecution that they might respond to persecution in righteousness and be edified rather than be overcome in sin, John 16:4a.
 10. Tenth, Jesus wanted his men to know He had not shared this information on persecution with them when He was first with them since He had been there to help them. However, in His leaving them, they needed to know this insight so they might respond well to persecution, so he had shared it with them, John 16:4b.

Lesson: Christ revealed that the believer by virtue of Christ's work in him exposes the world's sin, and the world hates and persecutes him for it. Thus, the believer must rely on the Holy Spirit to keep his mind aligned with Christ's truths on persecution and remain true to the Lord and not sin when persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we heed His John 15:18-16:4 insight that we might keep our minds aligned to the truth and not sin while facing persecution for righteousness' sake.