AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
BIBLE STUDY – WEDNESDAY AUGUST 12TH, 2026

Study Series: That You Might Believe, A Journey through the Gospel of John
Part 27: Hatred From the World & Help from The Spirit: Persecution and The Spirit's Ministry

Text: John 15:18-16:15 (NIV) **Teacher: Pastor Nneoma Ewurum**

Introduction
Jesus never promised His disciples acceptance from the world. He prepared them for opposition while promising that they would never face it alone. The same world that rejected Christ will often reject those who faithfully represent Him, but the Holy Spirit comes alongside believers as Helper, Witness, Guide, and Revealer of Christ. In this study, we will discuss why the world opposes followers of Jesus, why Jesus warns His disciples about persecution before it happens, the role of the Holy Spirit in all of this and how believers should respond to hostility.

What does the "world" mean in John 15:18-19?

The Greek word often translated "world" is *kosmos.* John uses this word in different ways. Sometimes it means humanity: *"For God so loved the world..." John 3:16.* God loves humanity, and we are not supposed to hate humanity.

John also uses "world" to describe a system of values, desires, priorities, and beliefs organized independently of and often in rebellion against God. *"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them". - 1 John 2:15*

Every unbeliever will not personally hate every Christian. He is describing the inevitable conflict between the kingdom of God and a world system operating in rebellion against God.

When you faithfully represent Jesus, the world (which is under the influence of Satan) will relate to you as it did to Him. If you are not experiencing persecution, it might be a sign that you have blended in too well with the world. 1 Timothy 3:12.

What are some of the ways you have experienced persecution or hate from the world?

Why does the world oppose believers? John 15:20-21

We do not belong to the world even though we are temporarily here in it so there is constant conflict about everything including our values, priorities, generosity, relationships, sexuality, marriage etc. Philippians 3:18-20.

No servant is greater than his master. If you follow a Master that was rejected, you should not expect universal acceptance. The same light that attracts one person can expose another.

Why did Jesus warn His disciples about persecution? John 16:1-4

When you expect something, you are better prepared for it.

Jesus wanted his disciples to be spiritually prepared for what following Him will cost them and to prevent their faith from shaking when the time comes. He did not want them to confuse difficulty with abandonment, opposition with failure, or persecution with being outside God's will.

To remain faithful to Jesus, we must expect the world's hatred and rely on the Holy Spirit for help. Expect resistance. Expect the Spirit's help.

The role of the Holy Spirit in hatred from the world and persecution. John 15:26 – 27. John 16:7-15.

The word Advocate here is the Greek word *"Paraklētos"* that literally means "called alongside" or "one called to help". It describes someone in a role of a defense attorney in the court of the law that spoke on behalf of a person, interceded for them, helps defend their case before a judge. It is commonly translated into English as advocated, helper, counselor, comforter.

1. The Holy Spirit is a force. He is a person, God Himself that walks along side with us as we live our lives out for glory of God. He advocates (defends or pleads our case), He helps (gives strength or assistance in difficulty situations), comforts and counsels (gives wise guidance and direction).
2. The Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus. John 15: 26-27.
3. The Holy Spirit was sent to us. John 16:7

Why is it for our good that Jesus left the world, and we have the Holy Spirit instead?

4. He convicts the world about sin, righteousness and judgement. John 16:8-11
5. He guides us into all truth. John 16:12-13.
6. He tells us what is to come. John 16:13.
7. He glorifies Jesus. John 16:14
8. He makes known the mind of Christ to us. John 16:15.

How should Christians respond to a hostile world?

1. Expect it. Don't be surprised. Prepare for it.
2. Don't respond to people with hostility. The same world that hates Christ is the world Christ came to save. Love the people in the world like Jesus did
3. Stand firm in faith and stay rooted in the truth of God's word. Do not compromise your faith or character
4. Don't dim or hide your light
5. Rely on the help of the Holy Spirit