

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

## JOHN 15.18-27



**T. M. Moore**

*A Scriptorium Study*

*And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,*

*He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

The Gospel of John: John 15.18-27  
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## Introduction to *John 15.18-27*

The friends and followers of Jesus can expect the world to respond to them just as it responded to Him.

So we'd better get ready for it.

Happily, we have the Holy Spirit to help and comfort us, and to empower us to be witnesses as He is a witness to Jesus.

Here is true comfort, indeed.

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T. M. Moore, Principal  
[tmmoore@ailbe.org](mailto:tmmoore@ailbe.org)

## 1 Get Used to It

Read and meditate on John 15.18, 19.

The world hated Jesus, that much is clear. But that means they will hate us, too. Friendship with Jesus, it seems, comes at a price. We must be willing and ready to pay it, since we are His friends.

*<sup>18</sup>“You must understand, that if the world hates you, it hated Me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup>Because, you see, if you were of the world, the world would love its own. And yet because you are not of the world, since I have chosen you, therefore the world hates you.”*

- John 15.18, 19

*Reflect*

1. Let's consider this important idea back to front. First, Jesus says that His friends are “not of the world.” What did He mean by that? In what sense are believers *of* the world? In what sense are we *not* of this world? Complete this prayer: *Lord Jesus, You have called me out of the world to send me into it. Help me understand...*

2. Jesus also said that His Kingdom is “not of this world” (Jn. 18.36). Yet He taught us to pray that His Kingdom would come *in* this world *as it is in heaven* (Matt. 6.10). How does the Kingdom *not* of this world come *in* this world? What is our role in this? How can we tell when we are fulfilling this calling (1 Thess. 2.12)? *I am Your child, Father, and a citizen and ambassador of Your Kingdom, Lord Jesus. My greatest challenge in this is...*

3. Paul summarized the meaning of this “not of the world” calling in Romans 14.17, 18. Here he defined the *character* of the Kingdom, the *condition* which that character brings into being, and the *consequences* for all who participate in that character and condition. How would you use the three terms Paul used here to explain to a new believer what it means to be *not* of this world, but *in* the world *for the sake of* the Kingdom? *Lord, You have called me to Your Kingdom and glory. Help me to know more of...*

4. As we seek the Kingdom of God unto righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit, what will be the effects of this on us? Should we expect these effects to be visible to others? In what ways? How will some who see these effects respond (1 Pet. 3.15)? But according to Jesus in verse 18, how will others respond? Why? *Lord, I hear You saying I should expect to be hated. Help me not to...*

5. If you are a friend of Jesus, then you will be hated by those who are friends of this world. What forms should you expect that hate to take? How can you prepare each day to deal with that hatred like Jesus did? Bring together into one the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“As if Christ’s suffering were not consolation enough, he consoles them still further by telling them that the hatred of the world would be an evidence of their goodness. They ought rather to grieve ... if they were loved by the world, as that would be evidence of their wickedness.” *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)*

We do not provoke the world to hate us, but we do not shy away from them doing so because we live in and bear witness to the truth that is in Jesus. If we are living our Kingdom-and-glory calling as Christ intends (1

Thess. 2.12; Matt. 6.33), the world will hate us, so we'd better get used to it. How can fearing the hatred of the world keep us from living as friends of Jesus?

*Closing Prayer*

Blessed *is* the man  
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
Nor stands in the path of sinners,  
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;  
But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,  
And in His law he meditates day and night.  
He shall be like a tree  
Planted by the rivers of water,  
That brings forth its fruit in its season,  
Whose leaf also shall not wither;  
And whatever he does shall prosper.  
The ungodly *are* not so,  
But *are* like the chaff which the wind drives away.  
Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,  
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.  
For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 1

**Psalm 1** (*St. Thomas: I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord*)

How blessed are they that shun sin's vain and wicked ways.  
For them has Christ salvation won; He loves them all their days.

God's Word is their delight; they prosper in its truth.  
In it they dwell both day and night to flourish and bear fruit.

Firm planted on the banks of God's great stream of grace,  
They raise unending praise and thanks to His great glorious face.

The wicked are not so, but, driven by the winds,  
They fall and perish, weighed with woe, when once God's wrath begins.

In Jesus' righteousness, though sinners fail and fall,  
His flock He will preserve and bless, who on His favor call.

## 2 For Want of Knowing God

Read and meditate on John 15.20, 21.

Why should we expect to be hated and persecuted in this world? Because people do not know God. Not, at least, as they should.

<sup>20</sup>“Remember then the word I spoke: ‘A servant will not greater be than is his lord.’ They persecuted Me, and they will persecute you also. And if they obey My Word, then understand, they will obey yours, too. <sup>21</sup>But they will do these things for My Name’s sake to all of you, because they do not know the One Who sent Me.”

- John 15.20, 21

Reflect

1. Meditate on Romans 1.18-21. Paul seems to be using the word *know* here in a different way than Jesus used it in our text. What’s the difference? Do people *know* God or not? Complete this prayer: *Lord, help me always to remember that even the most devoted unbeliever knows You, but...*
2. We might envision a spectrum of the knowledge of God that begins with Romans 1.18-21 and includes such passages as John 15.21, Philippians 3.7-11, 2 Peter 3.18, John 17.3, Galatians 4.9, and 2 Timothy 1.12. Using all these passages, explain what it means to *know* the Lord. Should we ever be content with the state of our knowledge of the Lord? Explain. *I know You, Lord, and I love You; but there is so much more of You to know! Help me every day to...*
3. Unbelievers *know* God, but they suppress or deny knowing Him. Thus, Jesus says they don’t *know* Him in the way His disciples do. Why should this make them prone to persecute those who *do* know Him? What should our attitude be toward those who, because they do not know the Lord, may persecute us? *Help me to look at others the way You do, Lord, so that I...*
4. Persecution can take various forms: snickering, making fun, scorning or getting angry, gossiping, threatening, and worse. When unbelievers respond like this to us, or to the Gospel as we share it with them, what do we need to keep in mind? Is it *your* name they’re persecuting? Explain. *Let me not take it personally, Lord, when people mock me for my faith, because...*
5. We should not fear the persecution that may come to us from those who do not know the Lord. Persecution isn’t pleasant, to be sure; but that’s no reason to avoid it. We are, after all, followers of Jesus, and we must be willing to follow Him into the ongoing persecution the world dishes at His Name. Meditate on Acts 5.40-42. Why were the apostles rejoicing at having been beaten? What did their being persecuted say to them? What should it say to us? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote from questions 1-4.

Summary

“‘All these things’ that ‘they will do to you’ refers to what he had just said, namely, that the world would hate and persecute you and despise your word.... ‘for my name’s sake.’ In other words, in you they will hate me, in you they will persecute me. They will not keep your word because it is my word.” *Augustine 354-430 AD*)

We must expect to know persecution in some form. We should not let the fear of persecution keep us from proclaiming the Good News, for if we are persecuted when we witness, it only proves that we are followers of Jesus. But we must not give back as we are given unto by those who persecute us. Remember Jesus. How can you prepare each day to deal with the persecution you may experience for Jesus' Name's sake?

*Closing Prayer*

The wicked plots against the just,  
And gnashes at him with his teeth.  
The Lord laughs at him,  
For He sees that his day is coming.  
The wicked have drawn the sword  
And have bent their bow,  
To cast down the poor and needy,  
To slay those who are of upright conduct.  
Their sword shall enter their own heart,  
And their bows shall be broken.  
A little that a righteous man has  
Is better than the riches of many wicked.  
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,  
But the LORD upholds the righteous.  
The LORD knows the days of the upright,  
And their inheritance shall be forever.

Psalm 35.12-18

**Psalm 35.10-16** (*Neumark: If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee*)

The wicked man shall shortly perish, his place no longer shall be found.  
The humble will God's grace inherit, and in His blessings much abound.  
The wicked plot the righteous' fall: God laughs; He will destroy them all!

The wicked wield their sword and arrow to cast the righteous to the ground.  
Them they would slay and fright and harrow, but God shall turn their schemes around.  
The little of the just is more than all the wicked lay in store.

### 3 If Only!

Read and meditate on John 15.22.

Oh, the power of Jesus' words! If only we would speak them as He did.

*22 "If I had not called them to repent, then they would have no sin; however, they have no excuse for sinning now."*

- John 15.22

*Reflect*

1. Jesus indicated that the world of His day, especially the Jewish world, did not have a true sense of sin until He came and spoke to them. What did He mean by this? Why did Jesus consider this an important part of His message? Complete this prayer: *Lord, in my own case, it took You speaking to me for me to...*
2. What does it suggest about the Good News, as Jesus spoke it, that it made people aware of their sins? Is this a good thing? Why? *Show me my sins, Lord, so that...*
3. If only Jesus hadn't come speaking about sin, the people wouldn't have known they were sinners. Is it good for people to be unaware that they are sinners? Explain. *Lord, do not let any sin get in the way of my fellowship with You. Instead...*
4. Those who hear Jesus speaking "have no excuse for their sin." But wait: We sin and make excuses all the time, don't we? What excuses do we tell ourselves for sinning against the Word of Christ? How does the Lord view those excuses? How should we view them? *Forgive me, Lord, whenever I make excuses for sinning, and help me instead...*
5. Jesus spoke to the world about sin, according to the words His Father had given Him. Shouldn't we speak to the world about sin as well, since He has given us all that He heard from the Father (v. 15)? How should we do that, beginning with ourselves? How would you expect people to respond to speaking to them about sin? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

"By participating in the word or reason, people are said to have sinned, that is, from the time they are capable of understanding, from the time that the reason implanted within them suggests to them the difference between good and evil. After they have begun to know what evil is, they are liable for any sin they commit."

*Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)*

Where the Gospel is concerned, we must not blink at sin, not in our own lives, not in one another's lives, not in the lives of our neighbors, not in the times in which we live. There is no Good News without the bad news. Jesus spoke to people about their sin, and so must we. Can you think of some effective ways of including sin in your presentation of the Gospel?

*Closing Prayer*

The fool has said in his heart,

"There is no God."

They are corrupt,

They have done abominable works,

There is none who does good.  
The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men,  
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.  
They have all turned aside,  
They have together become corrupt;  
*There is* none who does good,  
No, not one.  
Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge,  
Who eat up my people as they eat bread,  
And do not call on the LORD?  
There they are in great fear,  
For God *is* with the generation of the righteous.  
You shame the counsel of the poor,  
But the LORD *is* his refuge.  
Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!  
When the LORD brings back the captivity of His people,  
Let Jacob rejoice *and* Israel be glad.

Psalm 14

**Psalm 14** (*St. Ann: Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*)

The fool within his heart proclaims, "There is no God at all!"  
His deeds are wicked, filled with shame who on God will not call.

No good in such as these is found; corruption fills their breast.  
God from His heav'nly throne looks down, their hearts and ways to test.

None understands, none seeks the Lord; they all have turned aside.  
Deception leads them from God's Word who have His grace denied.

The workers of iniquity consume God's sheep like bread;  
They trust not in the Lord, and He shall fill their hearts with dread.

For Jesus with the righteous stands, though they be put to shame.  
He holds them safely in His hands who shelter in His Name.

Restore Your Church, let Zion sing; our captive hearts release,  
That we may Your salvation bring, rejoicing and in peace.

## 4 Hated for Good Works

Read and meditate on John 15.23, 24.

It wasn't just His teaching that exposed people's sin and made them hate Him. His works also, works of goodness and light, highlighted the darkness of their deeds, with predictable results.

<sup>23</sup> "I say  
that he who hates Me, hates My Father, too.  
<sup>24</sup> If I had not among them come to do  
the works which no one else could do, then they  
would have no sin. But as it is, though they  
have seen the works, they nonetheless hate Me,  
and hate My Father, too."

- John 15.23, 24

Reflect

1. Jesus went about doing good works, as Peter explained to Cornelius, and practically everyone knew this about Him (Acts 10.36-38). Why should people hate Jesus for doing good works? What was about His good works that incited people to hate Him? Complete the following prayer: *It's hard to understand, Lord, why people should resent good works, but let that not...*

2. How is Jesus using the word *hate* here? What does He mean? Is *hate* always a bad thing (cf. Ps. 97.10)? Does it always take an angry or violent form? What does it look like when someone hates Jesus? When someone hates sin? *Let me not fear the anger of those who hate You, Lord, but...*

3. According to Jesus, anyone who professes to love God, but does not love Jesus, is misguided. Jesus made it clear that He and the Father are One, so to hate Him is to hate God the Father. Do people today think they can believe in God, perhaps even love Him, and yet reject Jesus, or at least, not believe in Him as Savior? Jesus would have none of that. Should we? How should we respond to someone who says he loves God but doesn't believe in Jesus? *Lord, give me grace to speak to people about You the way You spoke to them, and to make it clear to them that...*

4. They hated Jesus, which means they also hated the Father. And they will hate us, too (v. 19). The thought of that might deter us from bearing witness to Jesus. Why? How can we overcome this concern about others hating us? How did Jesus overcome it? *Lord, You have called me to be Your witness, so I should expect that...*

5. No matter how many good works we do, or how clearly, patiently, and graciously we explain the Good News, there will always be some people who will hate us as a result. Does this mean there's something wrong with our faith? Or with Christianity? When we experience this, what should we conclude about our witness? That we've failed? Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

Summary

"If the Jews were asked whether they loved God, they would have replied that of course they loved him, not intentionally lying but only erroneously thinking they did. For how could those who hated the Truth love the Father of the Truth? They had no desire to have their conduct condemned, and yet it is the task of truth to condemn such conduct. And so, they hated the Truth even though at the time, they did not know he was the truth who came to condemn them. Therefore, they hate what they do not know. And hating it, they certainly cannot do anything else but hate him from whom he was born. Because they do not know the truth who is condemning them as the one who is born of God the Father, it is certain that they not only do not know the

Father but also hate the Father himself.” *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

We need to get used to the fact that some people will not like us not matter how gracious we are or how many good works we do. But we must not allow the fear of being disliked deter us from speaking truth and doing good. How can Christians help one another to stand firm in the face of others’ hatred?

*Closing Prayer*

Show me Your ways, O LORD;  
Teach me Your paths.  
Lead me in Your truth and teach me,  
For You *are* the God of my salvation;  
On You I wait all the day.  
Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses,  
For they *are* from of old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions;  
According to Your mercy remember me,  
For Your goodness’ sake, O LORD.  
Good and upright *is* the LORD;  
Therefore He teaches sinners in the way.  
The humble He guides in justice,  
And the humble He teaches His way.  
All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth,  
To such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.

Psalm 25.4-10

**Psalm 25.4-10** (*Festal Song: Revive Thy Work, O Lord*)

Make me to know Your ways, teach me Your paths, O Lord!  
My Savior, all day long I wait and seek You in Your Word.

Remember mercy, Lord, and steadfast love to me!  
And all my sins before You let them not remembered be!

My sins have been of old, Your love is new each day;  
According to Your goodness, Lord, regard my sinful way.

Upright and good are You, You lead us in Your way;  
The humble You instruct in truth and guide him day by day.

The paths of God are all of love and faithfulness;  
All they who keep His covenant the Lord will surely bless.

## 5 Word Conscious

*Read and meditate on John 15.25.*

Throughout His ministry, Jesus was conscious of fulfilling Old Testament types and prophecies. He not only recognized them as they came about – as in this instance – but He managed His time to fulfill what the Word of God declared. Sounds like something we should emulate.

<sup>25</sup>“But this, you see, has happened to fulfill the word which was recorded in their Law, Without a cause they hated Me.”

- John 15.25

Reflect

1. All the gospel writers make a point of showing ways that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament types and prophecies. How many examples of this can you cite? Why was it so important for them to do this? Complete this prayer: *Lord, You have said that all Scripture testifies of You (Jn. 5.39), so as I'm reading the Word...*

2. Besides those instances you noted in question 1, what other Old Testament references to Jesus – types, symbols, or prophecies – come to mind? Jesus bolstered His claims and work by referring to such Old Testament references. How can doing so help us in our witness for Christ? *Your Word is sure and true, Lord, as I see in...*

3. Suppose you had to construct a presentation of the Gospel using only Old Testament texts. Why might it be a good idea to do this? Briefly outline your version of such a presentation. *Help me to see You in all Scripture, Lord, so that I...*

4. Jesus cited the Scriptures as validation for His claims and ministry. He was continuously conscious of the teaching of Scripture, so that He commented on situations, such as this, and organized His life to carry out whatever was written about Him in the Word of God. Meditate on 1 Corinthians 2.16. Since we have the mind of Christ, how should we think about the way we conduct our lives? What does that entail? *Let Your mind work in me, Lord, and help me so to live that...*

5. It was in the plan of God for Jesus that many would hate Him because of what He spoke and the works He did. Jesus accepted this as God's plan, and did not try to avoid the hatred of others. How does His example and teaching counsel us with respect to the hatred others might have for us? How can we prepare for this each day? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“Here our Lord clearly shows that he is not unaware of the stubborn temper of the Jews but rather, he had foretold and knew in advance how they would respond. However, he still treated them with mildness and forgiveness as was befitting his divine nature. For he set before them the Word that called them to salvation even though they were ill disposed to receive it. And if any of them did have a good and suitable disposition, he even confirmed their faith by miracles. Here too he gives his disciples considerable benefit, with the goal that in a forgiving spirit they might extend the preaching of salvation even to those who offered them insults and might even in this be seen to walk in the path of excellence which was first revealed in Christ.” *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

The more we know of Scripture, and the more clearly and consistently we see Jesus throughout God's Word,

the more confidence we will have to live for Jesus in every area of our lives. As Jesus was continuously conscious of the teaching of God's Word, so we must strive to be. What counsel would you offer a new believer in this matter?

*Closing Prayer*

Trust in the LORD, and do good;  
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.  
Delight yourself also in the LORD,  
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.  
Commit your way to the LORD,  
Trust also in Him,  
And He shall bring it to pass.  
He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,  
And your justice as the noonday.

Psalm 37.3-6

**Psalm 37.1-6** (*Neumark: If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee*)

Let not the wicked make you worry;  
Envy not those who break God's Word.  
Like dying grass will they be sorry,  
And fade like every dying herb.  
Trust in the Lord and do His will;  
Dwell in His grace, be faithful still.

Delight yourself in God's salvation;  
He'll give you all your heart's desire.  
Commit to Him your every station,  
And His good purpose will transpire.  
Your righteousness a blazing light  
He will bring forth against the night.

## 6 When the Spirit Comes

Read and meditate on John 15.26, 27.

Christians quibble about what it means to be filled with the Spirit. But when the Spirit comes – really and fully comes – we’ll know it.

*26 “But when the Helper comes,  
Whom I will surely send unto you from  
the Father, He Who is the Spirit of  
all truth, Who from the Father, by His love  
proceeds, then He will testify of Me.  
27 And you will like witness unto Me,  
because you have been with Me from the start.”*

- John 15.26, 27

Reflect

1. Jesus and the Father have sent the Spirit to us to bind us together as one body before the Lord (Eph. 4.3). Why is it, then, that the Spirit has often been as much a source of *division* among believers, as of *unity*? Complete this prayer: *Thank You for Your Spirit, Lord, so that I...*

2. Jesus said the Spirit *proceeds* from the Father, as He Himself was *begotten* from the Father. How does this make it certain that the Spirit of God *is* God, just as the Word of God *is* God (Jn. 1.1)? The Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son; the son is neither the Father nor the Spirit; and the Father is neither the Son nor the Spirit. But all are God. Not three Gods, but one. How can this be? *Help me to accept, Lord, that there are mysteries about you and about my faith which I cannot fully understand, but which...*

3. Jesus said that the work of the Spirit would be to testify of Him. What He literally said was *bear witness* concerning Jesus. Is there a difference between *testifying* (NKJV) and *bearing witness*? How does the Spirit bear witness to Jesus? What is incumbent upon us for *receiving* that witness? *Your Spirit, Lord, is bearing witness to You in Your Word and throughout the creation. Help me to...*

4. Here, as in Acts 1.8, Jesus said that one effect of the Spirit’s bearing witness is that we “who have been with Jesus” would bear witness, too. In our text, Jesus was talking about the disciples. But He instructed them to teach us everything He had taught them (Matt. 28.18-20), so we can presume that we are called to bear witness to Jesus as well. This is the goal of the Spirit’s work in our lives (cf. Jn. 7.37-39). How would you counsel a new believer to expect the Spirit to *bear witness* in him? What does *bearing witness* presently look like in your life? *Lord, I am called to be Your witness, and my witness at present is...*

5. Jesus mentions two important criteria for fulfilling our calling to be His witnesses: First, we must be “with Him.” What does that entail in your life? Is your present practice of being with Jesus preparing you to fulfill your calling as His witness? Explain. Second, we must have the Spirit of God. Why? What does the Spirit do to help us fulfill our calling to witness? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

“The Lord promised to send the Comforter who would join us to God. For as a compacted lump of dough cannot be formed of dry wheat without liquid, nor can a loaf possess unity, so, in the same way, neither could we, being many, be made one in Christ Jesus without the water from heaven. And as dry earth does not produce fruit unless it receives moisture, in the same way we also, being originally a dry tree, could never have produced life-bearing fruit without the voluntary rain from above.” *Irenaeus of Lyons (135-202 AD)*

Jesus said the Spirit would be our *Helper* or *Comforter*, and that He is the Spirit of truth. Does He help or comfort us apart from the truth of God? Does He empower us to bear witness to Christ apart from the truth of God? How important is it, for the full working of the Spirit in our lives, that we grow continuously in the truth of the Lord?

*Closing Prayer*

The LORD *is* my strength and song,  
And He has become my salvation.  
The voice of rejoicing and salvation  
*Is* in the tents of the righteous;  
The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.  
The right hand of the LORD is exalted;  
The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.  
I shall not die, but live,  
And declare the works of the LORD.  
The LORD has chastened me severely,  
But He has not given me over to death.  
Open to me the gates of righteousness;  
I will go through them,  
*And* I will praise the LORD.  
This is the gate of the LORD,  
Through which the righteous shall enter.  
I will praise You,  
For You have answered me,  
And have become my salvation.  
The stone *which* the builders rejected  
Has become the chief cornerstone.  
This was the LORD's doing;  
It is marvelous in our eyes.  
This is the day the LORD has made;  
We will rejoice and be glad in it.  
Save now, I pray, O LORD;  
O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.  
Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the LORD!  
We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.  
God is the LORD,  
And He has given us light;  
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.  
You *are* my God, and I will praise You;  
You *are* my God, I will exalt You.  
Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!  
For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 118.14-29

**Psalm 118.14-29** (*St. George's Windsor: Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*)

In the Savior we are strong! He is all our strength and song!  
To His grace now raise your voice; in His righteousness rejoice!  
For the Lord does valiantly; we shall live eternally.  
Praise His works with all your breath, you whom He redeems from death.

*The Gospel of John: John 15.18-27*

All who know Christ's righteousness His great Name now thank and bless!  
Though His gate full righteous is, He our saving mercy is.  
Cast aside and left alone, Christ is now our Cornerstone!  
God has made His Son and Word our salvation: Praise the Lord!

Blest are they who in His Name come and Jesus' grace proclaim.  
God His light upon us shines in the Savior's sacrifice.  
Praise and thanks to You, O Lord; we extol Your holy Word!  
Thanks to You for You are good! Thanks to our great loving God!

## 7 As with Jesus, So with His Friends

Read and meditate on John 15.18-27.

When we, by the power of the Holy Spirit, are being Jesus to the people around us, we can expect that they will respond to us as they did to Him. And that's always a good thing.

<sup>18</sup>“You must understand, that if the world hates you, it hated Me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup>Because, you see, if you were of the world, the world would love its own. And yet because you are not of the world, since I have chosen you, therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup>Remember then the word I spoke: ‘A servant will not greater be than is his lord.’ They persecuted Me, and they will persecute you also. And if they obey My Word, then understand, they will obey yours, too. <sup>21</sup>But they will do these things for My Name’s sake to all of you, because they do not know the One Who sent Me. <sup>22</sup>If I had not called them to repent, then they would have no sin; however, they have no excuse for sinning now. <sup>23</sup>I say that he who hates Me, hates My Father, too. <sup>24</sup>If I had not among them come to do the works which no one else could do, then they would have no sin. But as it is, though they have seen the works, they nonetheless hate Me, and hate My Father, too. <sup>25</sup>But this, you see, has happened to fulfill the word which was recorded in their Law, ‘Without a cause they hated Me.’ <sup>26</sup>But when the Helper comes, Whom I will surely send unto you from the Father, He Who is the Spirit of all truth, Who from the Father, by His love proceeds, then He will testify of Me. <sup>27</sup>And you will like witness unto Me, because you have been with Me from the start.”

- John 15.18-27

Reflect

1. Why did some of the people of Jesus’ day hate Him? Why did some of the people of Jesus’ day hear His words and believe in Him? How should we be guided by Jesus’ experience, as we think about our own calling to follow Him? Complete this prayer: *Whatever You experienced, Lord, let me be ready to experience, too, so that...*
2. The word Jesus used to refer to the Holy Spirit can be variously translated *Helper*, *Comforter*, or even *Encourager*. Looking at Acts 1.8 (cf. Jn. 15.27), and what the Holy Spirit empowers us to be, why do we need to know Him in these terms? *Thank You for Your Spirit, Lord, to Whom I can look for...*

3. It's clear from this passage that Jesus' coming to earth entailed a direct confrontation with sin. Why? How? With what results? Can we be true followers of Jesus and not deal with sin as He did? Explain. *I know there's sin in my life, Lord, and that You would confront and deal with it. Help me to...*

4. Jesus came *to* the world, *from beyond* the world, *because of God's love* for the world, so that we might live *not of this* world. What does it mean for a Christian to live in the world without being part of the world? What are the greatest obstacles we need to overcome in doing this? *Lord, You have left us in this world to...*

5. Christians are neither put off nor impeded in their discipleship by the fact that some people may take offense, get angry, and hate or even persecute us. How do we rise above such challenges? How would you explain this aspect of the Christian life to a new believer? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

#### *Summary*

"Jesus indicates to his disciples that they will encounter every kind of disgrace, saying, 'The slave is not above his lord.' 'For,' he says, 'wicked people attacked me with their unbridled tongues. And leaving no kind of insult untried, they called me a man possessed of a devil and a drunkard and the fruit of fornication. Yet I did not immediately seek their punishment, but not being cut to the heart by their insults, I granted to my hearers the word of salvation.' Do not, then, seek out of reason your own aggrandizement or scorn the limits within which your Lord was bound, who lowered himself to such humiliation for us to benefit all.'" *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

Where do you most need to improve as a follower and friend of Jesus, and His witness in your world?

#### *Closing Prayer*

You who fear the LORD, praise Him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!  
For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;  
But when He cried to Him, He heard.  
My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;  
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.  
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.  
Let your heart live forever!  
All the ends of the world  
Shall remember and turn to the LORD,  
And all the families of the nations  
Shall worship before You.  
For the kingdom *is* the LORD's,  
And He rules over the nations.  
All the prosperous of the earth  
Shall eat and worship;  
All those who go down to the dust  
Shall bow before Him,  
Even he who cannot keep himself alive.  
A posterity shall serve Him.  
It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation,  
They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born,  
That He has done *this*.

Psalm 22.23-31

**Psalm 22.29-31** (*Dix: For the Beauty of the Earth*)

All the prosp'rous of the earth shall before His mercy fall;  
Bending low before His worth, hear them humbly on Him call.  
Even those low in the grave He will by His mercy save.

Let the generations all witness to His saving grace;  
Let them to all nations call, "Bow before His holy face!"  
Let the children of the earth hear of Jesus' saving worth!

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. People hated Jesus because He exposed their sin by His words and deeds. Why do people get upset about being exposed as sinners?
2. We need power beyond our own strength to enable us to be witnesses to Jesus. How does the Holy Spirit enable us to fulfill this calling?
3. Why did Jesus think we needed to know that the world would hate and persecute us? Should we remind ourselves of this from time to time? Why or why not?
4. How do you experience the Holy Spirit's work as *Helper* or *Comforter*?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from John 15.18-27? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*Items for prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.