

THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE

JOHN 15:23-25 • TV112A

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John 15:23-25

“He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, they hated me without a cause.”

I’m going to be reading today from the book of **John, chapter 15:23 through 25**. I’d like for you, if you will, to take your Bible and read along with me. I’ll be speaking to you on the subject: **“THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.”**

In **John 15:23** the Master is speaking and he says; *“He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin, but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, they hated me without a cause.”*

When the prophets of old wrote of the Redeemer who was to come, when they wrote of the Messiah and the Scripture says in **Acts 10:43**, *“To him give all the prophets witness.”* They wrote that the Messiah would be despised, that He would be rejected, and that He would be hated by men.

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Now, let me just give you a few verses from the Old Testament which teach this. In **Psalm 69**; it's what we call a Messianic Psalm, its David writing but David is writing about the Messiah, he's writing about the Redeemer.

He says in **Psalm 69**; *"They hated me without a cause."* This is a Scripture to which our Lord was referring in the text, He said, *"As it is written in their law; they hated me without a cause."*

Psalm 22; another one of those Messianic Psalms and you will find in **Psalm 22** the very words of Christ from the cross: *"My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*, *"They parted my garments and cast lots"* and *"I thirst,"* all of these verses are from **Psalm 22**.

Here in **Psalm 22:6** he says; *"I am worm and no man. I am a reproach of men and despised of the people."* Then, in **Isaiah 53: 2 and 3** Isaiah wrote about the Messiah, the Redeemer. You know he said; *"He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities and the chastisement of our peace was upon him."*

Well here in **verse 3** Isaiah said; *"He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."* Then the prophet Zachariah wrote in **chapter 13:6**: *"Lord, what are these wounds in thy hand? Then he shall answer, these are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."*

And the prophet Isaiah said, *"No beauty that we should desire him. We hid as it were our faces from him."*

So, all the way through the Old Testament when the prophets of old talked about the coming Redeemer, they prophesied that He would not be well received but rather *"he would be despised and rejected and hated of men, and hated without a cause."*

And then, when our Lord Jesus came into the world, the hatred began. It began from the very time of His birth, for the Scripture tells us that Herod tried unsuccessfully to destroy Him when He was but an infant.

This hatred which began at His birth continued all the way to the cross on Golgotha's Hill. They ridiculed His beginning; they said, *"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"*

Then, they ridiculed His trade; they said, *"Is not this the carpenter?"* Then, they ridiculed and mocked his holiness, they said: *"He's the friend of sinners. He eateth with publicans and sinners. He's gone to be the guest of a man that is a sinner."*

They put a question mark on His righteousness and on His integrity. They called Him a *"wine bibber,"* they called him a *"glutton."* They said, *"He has a devil."* *"If he's casting out devils he's casting out devils by the power of Beelzebub the devil."*

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They tried to stone Him on several occasions and they tried one time to throw Him off a cliff. They asked Him to leave their cities. There was one group of people in particular that asked Him to leave their city and never come back again.

These people hated Him so much that they paid one of His disciples to betray Him. And because they could find no fault in Him they went out and hired liars and false witnesses to testify against Him.

Then they took Him down to the soldier's house and put a crown of thorns on His head and they spat upon Him and they scourged Him with a cat of nine tails and then they drove nails in His hands and feet and crucified Him on a cross.

They hated Him alright. They despised and rejected Him. The question I'm asking in my message today is why?

Now, we know it's so, all the way through the Scripture, even the Old Testament prophets tell us: *"No beauty about him that we should desire him. We hid as it were our faces from him. He's despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, hated without a cause."*

Then, from the time of His birth, until the time they nailed Him to the cross, men hated Him and despised Him and rejected Him. Why? Why this awful hatred for one so holy? Why this awful hatred for one so good? Why this awful hatred for one so pure?

Was it because He healed the sick? No, this is not the reason, for it says in **John chapter 2:23**: *"Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did, but he did not commit himself to them, because he knew what was in man and he needed not that any man should testify unto him what was in man; he knew what was in man."*

But what I'm saying is this, when He healed all these people and performed these miracles of healing (giving sight, hearing and strength to the lame legs), they gathered around Him. They had no objection to His healing people.

And I'm saying that people today have no objection to Christ's healing. You can get a big crowd if you put on a healing service. If you pretend to heal broken limbs and give sight to blind eyes and hearing to deaf ears you can get any man to follow the "Jesus" that they preach.

He had no problem when He was here on the earth getting people to follow Him if He would heal them. A fellow will follow anything to get healing. He will pay anything to get healing. His health is important to him.

So, that wasn't the problem, that wasn't why they hated Christ. That wasn't why they stoned Him. That wasn't why they nailed him onto a cross (because He healed people). That wasn't it at all. That's not the issue. It wasn't then and it is not now.

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Well, was it because He fed the multitude? He did that on several occasions. Well let's see, **John 6:26**; "*You seek me.*" Here was a large crowd of people. Our Lord had to get out in the boat to escape the people; crowds of them, multitudes of them, and great throngs of people followed Him. He went all the way around the lake to get away from them.

Finally they found Him and they said: "*When you coming over here?*" He said, **John 6:26**; "*I know why you seek me. You seek me not because of the miracles, not because I heal the sick, but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled.*" "You were in that crowd of 5,000 that I fed with the five loaves and two fish. And I know why you are running after me; you are running after me because you want another meal. You want something to eat."

And I'm telling you the issue today is not prosperity or wealth. Men will follow Christ if you promise them prosperity; they will follow anybody if he promises them prosperity. If you promise a man that if he gives 10% and you will give him 90 back, he will follow you.

Promise a man a profit on all of his goods and he will follow you. Promise man good times and good health and great wealth and prosperity and all of these things; he will believe anything you tell him. There's no problem there and Christ didn't have any problem with that either.

The great crowds followed him because He fed them. They got something for nothing, they got something for nothing. This is what we are hearing today, the health and wealth Gospel: "Believe on Jesus and He will heal you. Believe on Jesus and He will prosper you."

Well they did the same thing back in that day; those very same people later that cried; "*Crucify him, crucify him,*" these were those that were following Him when He healed them and fed them. There it is right there in the Word of God.

Well, was it because He raised the dead? No sir! They didn't hate Him for raising the dead; turn to **John 12:10 through 18** read that Scripture; that's when He raised Lazarus from the dead and it got out; the word of His raising Lazarus from the dead swept that countryside.

He had raised a man from the dead. Here was a man who was dead, (dead four days) and Christ raised him from the dead and went home to his two sisters. And the word spread everywhere and people came from everywhere.

And the Lord came into the city and they threw palm branches in front of the donkey on which He was riding and they cried, "*Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*"

Boy, just think about it! "Here's a fellow that if we follow Him we won't die or if we do die He will bring us forth from the grave." They just cried, "*Hosanna, Hosanna.*" And it wasn't very many days until they were crying: "*Crucify him, crucify him; we will not have this man reign over us!*"

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And people today if you will promise them “pie in the sky in the sweet by and by;” they will believe anything you say. They will follow anything you say. You can tell a man that after he dies Christ will raise him and he will believe anything.

But, that wasn't the issue. You see, I'm showing you this from God's Word. That's not why He was hated. He wasn't hated because He healed people. He wasn't hated because He prospered people and fed them. He wasn't hated because He raised Lazarus from the dead.

Well, if they didn't hate Him for the miracles and for feeding the 5,000 and for raising Lazarus, why did they hate Him? Well, I'm like the old evangelist who traveled through here years ago said; “Buy you a Bible and find out.”

Look at here at **John chapter 10:19**: *“There was a division among the people for these sayings.”* You can find that all the way through the writings of the evangelists, *“When they heard these words they were filled with wrath.”*

When He spake these things they took up stones to stone Him. There was a division among the people for these sayings. When they heard these things many of his followers turned away and walked no more with Him.

It wasn't the healing, it wasn't the feeding the 5,000, it wasn't raising the dead; it was His doctrine that offended many. It is what He said. It was what He taught. That's what offended them. That's what made them angry. That's what brought forth the hatred from the hearts of these people, what He said.

Now, let me show you that. I'm going to give you four occasions on which the people tried to actually kill the Lord Jesus Christ because of how much they hated Him, because of the way they despised Him, because of what He said.

Perhaps you would like to jot them down or follow in your Bible. Why did they hate the Lord? Christ said: *“They hated me without a cause. Marvel not my brethren that the world hate you; it hated me before it hated you.”* Why?

First of all: John 10:30: *“I and my Father are one.”* And you know that word “my” is in italics and it's not in the original. He is saying: *“I and Father are one and then the Jews took up stones to stone him.”* And He said: *“Many good works have I done among you, for which of these do you stone me?”* And they said, *“For a good work we stone thee not but we stone thee for blaspheme because; thou being a man makest thyself God.”*

They knew what He was saying. I know what He was saying. Do you know what He was saying? He is saying, *“I and Father are one.”* “I am God.” That's what He is saying. He is saying that He is God.

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Now my friend, I don't know, men did not believe that He was God and the world does not now believe that Jesus of Nazareth is very God of very God. But the Bible declares that Jesus Christ is God almighty in human flesh. That is what the Bible teaches.

It says over here in **Isaiah 7:14**: *“The Lord himself shall give you a sign, a virgin shall be with child and bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name (of that Son) Immanuel”* (God with us, God in human flesh, God incarnate, God and man in one person).

Isaiah 9:6: *“Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, and the Everlasting Father.”* That's who He is. Who is Jesus of Nazareth? He's God almighty in human flesh. That's what He's saying in **John 10:30**: *“I and Father are one.”*

And they started grabbing for big stones. He said: *“Now hold it! I've done many good works for which of them are you stoning me?”* They said, *“We are stoning you because you are man, and you can't be God. God can't be a man.”*

Well, the Bible says so. **John chapter 1:1, 14** says, *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word who was with God and was God and by whom all things were made; that Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.”*

Acts 20: 28; Paul is addressing the elders of Ephesus and he is leaving them and before he leaves he is saying to them: *“I charge you to feed the church of God which he purchased with his own blood.”* Whose blood? God's blood!

You say, “How did God shed his blood?” God became a man. Then, in **Hebrews chapter 1:8**: *“The Father said to the Son; (He never said this to the angels), to which of the angels said this at any time, sit thou on my right hand. And to the Son he saith thy throne O God is forever.”* To the Son, the Father said: *“Thy throne O God is forever.”*

1 Timothy 3:16: *“Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.”* God in human flesh. *“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”* **Isaiah 45:22**: *“Look unto me and be ye saved because I'm God and there's none else.”*

My friend, Jesus Christ said to this crowd what I'm saying to you and it brought forth anger and hatred and it brought forth retaliation. He said: *“I and Father are one.”* You are looking at the Father. Phillip said: *“Show us the Father.”* He said, *“You are looking at him. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”*

Secondly: And then, all the attributes of deity are in Christ!

What are the attributes of deity? Well, the attributes of deity are omnipotence, that is God is almighty, almighty God. Christ is almighty. He said: *“All authority and power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”*

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Well, what about omniscience, that is, God knows everything? Christ knew everything; He knew their thoughts. Well what about omnipresent? That means that God is everywhere. *“Wither shall I flee from thy presence?”* Christ said, *“Lo I’m with you always even to the end of the earth.”*

What about holiness? *“He knew no sin.”* What about eternal existence? He said, *“I Am, I Am.”* The same word that was spoken on that mountain to Moses is the word He spoke to His disciples and to those religious people of His day, *“I Am, I Am.”*

Power to give life; only God can create life; Christ said. *“The Son quickeneth whom he will.”* Power to forgive sin, only God can forgive sin. Christ said, *“Thy sins be forgiven thee.”* Thomas had it right when he fell on his face and cried, *“My Lord and my God.”*

So my friend, that’s the first, that’s the first occasion for this terrible hatred and anger when He declared who He is, God almighty.

Then, in **Luke chapter 4**, if you will, turn to **Luke 4:28**; now listen to this; *“And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, (not when they saw healing, miracles, feeding and prosperity, when they heard his message), when they heard the truth of his Word, when they heard these things they were filled with wrath and would have killed him. They led him out to the brow of the hill and would have thrown him off the cliff.”*

Why? What had He said that generated such horrible hatred to turn a Sabbath morning worship service into a lynch mob? That’s what it was. These people had met in the synagogue on the Sabbath morning to hear the Scriptures read and hear the preacher and the reader was Jesus of Nazareth and the preacher was Jesus of Nazareth.

And He would face this huge crowd, and this was His hometown Nazareth. And He faced this crowd; this was supposed to be the Lord’s people on the Sabbath Day in the worship service. And He faced them and this is what He said as He read **Isaiah 61**: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor and give sight to the blind and deliverance to the captives, to declare the acceptable year of the Lord.”* And he closed the book and he said: *this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.”*

“But you are saying to me this proverb; Physician heal thyself. What you did in other cities do in our city.” But I tell you the truth, there were many lepers in the land of Israel.” Now Israel thought they were God’s people and God was obligated to them and God owed them something.

“There were many lepers in the land of Israel in the days of the prophet and none of them were healed, not a one, (but a gentile named) Naaman. And he said there were many widows, many widows in the land of Israel, in the days of the prophet but none of them were fed but a gentile.”

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In other words, this is what He is saying; “You people think you have a corner on God. You think that God’s obligated to you. You think that God owes you something. Well, I am saying this to you; this is what Christ is saying; “Mercy is sovereign, grace is sovereign.”

God said: *“I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.”* And God is not obligated to any person regardless of His ancestry, regardless of His tradition, regardless of His ceremonialism and regardless of His so-called outward righteousness.

“God will show mercy to whom he will show mercy” and He shows mercy to the needy, not because He owes anybody anything. They got so angry when He told them they were sinners like anybody else and dependent on the mercy of God like anybody else and shut up to the sovereign grace of God like anybody else. They became so angry that they turned their Sabbath morning worship service into a lynch mob.

Now, I will tell you a way to approach the Son of God in order to obtain mercy; you approach Him like the leper. When he came down from the mountain the Scripture says: *“A man who had leprosy met him and fell on his face.”*

And he didn’t say: “Lord, Abraham was my father and you owe me something.” He didn’t say: “Lord; my mother and daddy were believers and you owe me something.” He didn’t say: “Lord I have served you all my life and given the time, talents, and tithe to you; he came and fell on his face and said: *“Lord if you will, you can make me clean, if you will.”*

And that is what Christ is saying to His people. God owes you nothing. Oh, I take that back; God owes us the wages of sin. We’ve earned that, that’s coming to us and we deserve it and we are going to get it: *“The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life.”*

And that gift is given sovereignly as He pleases. Our Lord said: *“I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth. You’ve hid these things from the wise and from the prudent and you have revealed it to babes for even so Father; it’s been good in your sight.”*

Our Lord told these people that God was not obligated, that God was not our servant, that God is not our valet, that God almighty is not waiving at the beckon call of a crooked finger. Almighty God is sovereign in giving His grace and mercy to whom He will. And that’s so and that made them angry.

If you will, turn to **John 8:59**. Now listen to this in **John 8:59**: *“Then took they up stones to cast at him.”* They were going to stone Him again, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

My friend; He’s in the temple again. These people who are going to stone the perfect, holy, immaculate, Son of God, they are religious people.

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Now that's surprising; isn't that surprising to you? But, do you know that every one of the apostles were martyred or slain except one, John? They were all killed by religious people, religious hatred.

And do you know why these people took up stones to stone him? Well, let me show you. Go back to **John 8:24**.

First of all; He called them sinners.

He said: *"If you believe not that I am he you are going to die in your sins."* If you don't have a Saviour, if you don't have a Redeemer, if you don't plea to me for mercy, you are going to die in your sins. *"And if you die in your sins you can't come where I am."*

Secondly: Then He said *"They were of their father the devil."*

Look at **verse 44**, He said: *"You are of your father the devil."* "God's not your Father. You might boast and swear on a stack of Bibles that God's your Father but God's not your Father." Christ denied the universal fatherhood of God. God is the Father of His children. He's not the Father of the children of wrath. He's not the Father of the devil's children.

Christ said; look at it in **verse 44**: *"You are of your father the devil and his work you will do, he was a liar from the beginning."* Then He calls them liars in **verse 55**. Then, in **verse 47** He tells them; *"You hear not God's word because you are not of God. He that is of God heareth God's word."*

These are strong words but these are not my words. These are the words of Christ and they hated Him for it, not for His works, for His words, not for His miracles, for His message. That's why they hated Him and that's why they nailed Him to that cross. He said: "I'm God and I'm a sovereign God."

He called them sinners and told them they needed mercy, they needed help, they needed forgiveness, and they needed grace. They said, "We don't need you and we don't need your mercy. We are Abraham's son and we will rest in our heritage and rest in our tradition."

Then, last of all: In **John 6:66** it says, *"From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him."* What did He say this time to make all of these people turn and leave him?

Well, He said in **verse 53 of John 6**: *"Verily I say unto you except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood you have no life in you."*

Life is not in ceremony, it's in the blood of Christ. Life is not in rituals of religion, it's in the sacrifice of Christ. He is our Passover. *"Except you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, you have no life."* There's no life in your law, no life in your religion, no life in your ceremony; life's in Christ: *"They hated me without a cause!"*