

Introduction:

- Happy Valentine's Day! I have an unusual topic for Valentine's Day. But it continues the series on the overcoming life. St. Valentine was beheaded for marrying Roman soldiers that Caesar said should remain single. There were also two other priests imprisoned and killed for their good works.
- Theme: Living a life of love while being hated.
- It was George Orwell who said, *"The further a society drifts from the truth the more it will hate those who speak it."* I guess as believers that makes us targets, since we hold the truth.
 - We could make the Orwell quote personal. *"The further a person drifts from the truth the more they will hate those who speak it."*
- Face the facts scriptures
 - *"If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first."* (John 15:18, NLT)
 - *"And all nations will hate you because you are my followers. But everyone who endures to the end will be saved."* (Matthew 10:22, NLT)
 - *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."* (Romans 8:35-37, ESV)
- I would like to say that it doesn't matter who you are. If you profess Christ as your Lord and Savior, you will be persecuted.

I. When People Hate You

- A. True hatred is an intense, extremely personal emotion.
 1. It usually implies a bitter grudge which has grown over time.
 2. It is spread through lies and deceptions that appeal to anger.
 3. It is a demonic spirit that incites people, systems, and organizations to be infected with it.
- B. Who are the haters?
 1. People will hate you. Luke 6:22 Jesus says that people (anthropos) will hate you. People by nature are born into sin. Their hearts are filled with darkness, because without Christ they are spiritually dead. This death and darkness in the hearts of people lead them to hate which is the opposite of love.
 2. The world will hate you. John 15:8 Jesus says that the world hates (cosmos) you. Κοσμος - world. The world is viewed as an ordered society. The systems of the world, the structural order or systems of the world.
 3. The nations will hate you. Mt 24:9 Jesus says that all nations will hate you. (All nations) All means all. (Ethnos). If everyone hates you, you have been singled out.
 4. Un-sanctified believers will hate you. *"If anyone claims, 'I am living in the light,' but hates a fellow believer, that person is still living in darkness."* (1 John 2:9, NLT) There is far, too much...Tension, finger pointing, accusations, and judgmental attitudes out there between Christians.

- C. What is the nature of hate? “What blessings await you when people hate you and exclude you and mock you and curse you as evil because you follow the Son of Man.” (Luke 6:22, NLT) The nature of hate. The following are ways that hates makes its presence felt.
1. Hate - *miseo*. To be an object of dislike. To be opposed. Aversion or hostility. Biblical usage represents a broad range of differences from intense malice to simple disregard.
 2. Exclude - *aphorízō*. This compound means “to separate,” “to sever.” *Kittle*. The World retaliates against Christians for separating themselves from the world. Then they separate us from themselves.
 3. Mock - *óneidos*. This word seems to come from a root meaning “to revile,” and it means: to insult, disgrace, abuse, or to be the “object of disgrace or shame.”
 4. Curse - *ekbállō*. a. “To throw out, expel, repel.”
 5. These four words mix together to form what we know as hate.
- D. What does hate produce? Pain. Pain physically, mentally, emotionally. ““*Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers.*” (Matthew 24:9, NLT) Those who hate, exclude, mock and curse you will eventually: arrest, persecute and kill you.
1. Arrested - *παραδομι* - to be handed over. We hear this many times in the Gospels.
 2. Persecuted - *θλιβω-thlíbō* means:
 - a) Literally, to press, squash, hem in, then “to be narrow.” *thlípsis* means “pressure.
 - b) *Thlíbō* means to afflict, harass: to cause discomfit, to oppress or vex.
 - c) “Paul taught that everyone who desires to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (2 Tim 3:12). He did not say, “Just the awkward, hyper-spiritual, loud-mouthed-and-lacking-love believer.” He said all. And to help us, God gave us a book full of godly, yet hated men and women pursuing righteousness.”
 3. Killed - to cause to die often by violent means.
 4. Hatred is an apocalyptic sign (*Mt. 10:22; Lk. 21:17*). *Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). TDNT (p. 598). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.*
 - a) The effects of this hate is that many will turn away from Jesus and begin hating each other. Offenses will increase. Mt 24
 - b) Sin will be rampant and love will grow cold. Mt 24 Hate causes love to grow cold.

II. Why Am I Hated

- A. The world is blinded and encouraged by darkness and therefore hates the light (Jn. 3:20). Since Jesus is the light, the world hates Jesus (7:7). In so doing it hates God (15:23-24). It also

hates the disciples (15:18). To live in the light is to be a target of hate. Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). TDNT (p. 599). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.

- B. Why does the world hate Christians?
1. The world hates us because we are not part of the world.
 - a) *"The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you."* (John 15:19, NLT)
 - b) *"You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God."* (James 4:4, NLT)
 2. We are hated because we follow Christ.
 - a) *"If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first."* (John 15:18, NLT)
 - b) Matthew 10:22 *"And all nations will hate you because you are my followers."*
 3. The world hates God and we remind them of the God they hate. (I.e. atheists)
 - a) *"Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, **hate**, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. They are backstabbers, **haters of God**, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents."* (Romans 1:29-30, NLT)
 - b) John 15:25 *"This fulfills what is written in their Scriptures: They hated me without cause."*
 4. The darkness always hates the light. Jn 3:19-21 Light came into the world and men loved darkness.
 5. People hate the truth. Romand 1:18; Amos 5:12
 6. The world hates us because of our mission.
 7. They mistake love for hate.
 - a) Proverbs 27:5 *"An open rebuke is better than hidden love!"*
 - b) You can talk to someone about sin in a very tender and loving way yet they may say to you, "You Christians are so hateful."
 8. The world thinks Christians are stupid.
 - a) *"Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. ..."* (1 Corinthians 1:27, NLT)
 9. We are hated because of false teachers. Mt 23: Pharisees, Sadducees, religious teachers.
 10. They want to keep their sins and they don't like their sins being exposed.
 - a) *"The world ... does hate me because I accuse it of doing evil."* (John 7:7, NLT)
 11. They hate us because we are not doing evil with them.
 - a) We won't do what they like to do.
 - b) We are bad for business. Sinful business that is. Integrity stands against darkness.
- C. You are hated because in Christ you are separated from this world. It makes their sin more visible.

1. IE. The Pharisees hated this about Jesus. He pointed out their sin by what He said and by what He did.
2. We hold to One Way to the Father and that is Jesus. The world wants many ways.

III. Loving Through the Hate

- A. Expect it. Just know if you are going to be a Jesus loving Christian you are going to be hated. Knowing that you can prepare in advance to walk in love, respond in love, and speak the truth with love.
- B. We cannot become haters or practice what haters practice. Martin Luther said, "*Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night that is already void of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.*"
- C. Love your enemies - Lk 6:35-37
 1. "*But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you.*" (Luke 6:27, NLT) As Charles Spurgeon quipped, "*kindness is our revenge.*" This is so powerful if the believer can grasp understanding of power of love to trump hate.
 2. Sermon on the Mount. **** "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven..." (Matthew 5:43-45, NLT)
 - a) You have heard/or you think that it is o.k to hate your enemies, post sarcastic remarks about them, degrade them on public forums. But I say, 'Love your enemies!'
 - b) Pray for those who persecute you.
 - c) Do those two things and you will be acting like true children of God.
 - d) "*Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles*" (Proverbs 24:17)
- D. Love is the power of the cross! Think of all the hate directed at Jesus upon the cross. Yet love put Him there! Love caused Christ to conquer over sin!
 1. Christ demonstrated his love (Romans 5:8) while we were yet sinners. "*but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8, ESV)
 - a) God demonstrates/shows - present tense.
 - b) While we were sinners He died! Past tense. Finished work with continuing results.
 - c) Everything God takes us through is to produce hope. Ro 5:3-5. How can we do this??? By the Love that God has poured into our hearts.
 2. "*For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.*" (Romans 5:10, NLT)
 3. The cross
 - a) The cross is a picture of violence, yet the key to peace;
 - b) A picture of suffering, yet the key to healing;
 - c) A picture of death, yet the key to life;
 - d) A picture of utter weakness, yet the key to power;

- e) A picture of capital punishment, yet the key to mercy and forgiveness;
- f) A picture of vicious hatred, yet the key to love;
- g) A picture of supreme shame, yet the Christian's supreme boast.
- 4. God allowed man to play out his hateful, murderous intentions at the cross. And Christ willingly gives His life for the sins of the human race.
- E. It is the cross of Christ, and it is horrifically beautiful. Love covered a multitude of sin!
 - 1. Jesus took the wrath of God upon Himself to satisfy God's justice.
 - 2. We were guilty, we hated yet he loved and He died for us.

Conclusion:

- This Valentine's Day let's remember the depth of love and the power of love to overcome.
- Love will empower you to overcome hate without becoming a part of it.