

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

JOHN 15:18-25

DISCUSSION 1: LOVE VS HATE

1. How do you think John 15:12-17 and its message of God's love for us relates to 15:18-25 and its message of the world's hatred of us?
2. Why is knowing God and abiding in His love essential for endurance in trials and persecution? Why is having genuine love for God essential for following Him when attacked or alienated by the world?
3. What are ways you can abide in God's love to give you strength, joy, and endurance in hardship?

DISCUSSION 2: BELONGING

1. Read John 15:18-25 again. What are three things Jesus says that are meant to encourage believers in trials or persecution. Identify them, and then state why that statement might be encouraging.
2. What do you think John means in this passage when he talks about "the world"?
3. What are ways or times you're tempted to believe you belong to the world? When do you feel or experience you don't belong to the world?
4. How can you live so you don't create too much of a sense of belonging in the fallen world?

DISCUSSION 3: IN, NOT OF, FOR

1. In John 14-17, Jesus saves his disciples out of the world but also sends them into the world. He wants his followers to be *in the world* but not *of the world* so we can be *for the world*. Why are all three of these important? What happens if any one of the three is missing?
2. What are ways you personally, as a family, or your small group can better be:
 - In the world
 - Not of the world
 - For the world
3. In what ways is God's world our home, and in what ways is this world not our home? Why are both perspectives important?

DISCUSSION 4: IN THIS WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TROUBLE

1. Why did/does the world hate Jesus (15:18)? Do you see similar reasons the world hates Christians globally today? Why or why not?
2. Christians can perceive suffering in this world as if it's abnormal, unfair, or because God is against us. Why should this text (and others like John 16:33; 1 Peter 5:12-19) help us view suffering as normal in this life? Why might that change our perspective in suffering and trust God's purposes?
3. What are benefits or things God does for our good through trials, pain, suffering, and persecution? What are ways you've experienced that in your own life?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What are reasons people wanted to kill Jesus in the gospels?
2. If we are followers of Jesus, and they mistreated him, should we expect that some will be against and mistreat us as well? Why or why not?
3. When people mistreat us because we are in Jesus, how should we respond?