

Jesus Is Our Example in Persecution

February 24, 2019

THE
DISCIPLE
MAKER

Open: Often when we speak of Christian persecution, it feels inappropriate to compare our suffering with the sufferings of other believers around the world, many of whom have it far worse than we do. Without forgetting this truth, what are some ways that we might experience persecution for faith in our context, even if it is in small ways?

Read: John 15:18-25

Discuss:

1. When we suffer persecution, how does it help us to know that the world hated Jesus long before it hated us (v. 18)? Why is it important to remind yourself and others of this truth?
2. What does it mean to think of yourself as not belonging to this world (v. 19)? How does that idea give you strength to remain faithful to Jesus when the world persecutes you?
3. What do you think Jesus means when he says, "I chose you out of the world" (v. 19)? How should knowing this enable us to better endure persecution?
4. Jesus said, "a servant is not greater than his master" (v. 20). In view of the context of this passage, how would you put that statement into your own words? Have you ever experienced persecution because you were a follower of Jesus? How did you know it was because of your relationship to Jesus?
5. According to Jesus' words in verse 20, what would be appropriate questions to ask if you're not experiencing persecution? How do you answer some of these questions?
6. In verses 21-22, how does Jesus explain the reason for the hatred of the world against him and his followers? In what way does this help you to understand and still love those who are antagonistic toward Jesus and his followers?

Apply: How would you go about building a relationship with people who seem to have a hatred for Jesus or God?

Pray: Pray for those around the world who are experiencing persecution, that they will glorify God in their suffering and be comforted by their identity in Christ.

John 15:18-25

¹⁸ "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ Whoever hates me hates my Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.' (ESV)