

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION (John 15:18-6:4)

1. Have you ever been ridiculed/insulted/mocked/hurt in some way for your commitment to Christ?

If so, what was the specific situation and did you say or do something that seemed to lead to the situation?

How did you react to the actions taken against you?

Did it cause you to fear, worry, be anxious about what else might or would happen?

Did you find yourself even more emboldened in the face of the harsh treatment?

If not, why might that be the case?

Could this mean that you're not fully committed to Jesus and living like "the world" so they've "accepted" you?

If this is the case, take some time to go before the Holy Spirit and ask Him to reveal where you can grow in Him!

Confess your sins as the Holy Spirit convicts you and ask for Him to strengthen you to walk by the Spirit!

Could this be a result of the culture(s) in which you've lived where you haven't been faced with something like that?

If this is the case, give thanks to the Lord for His faithfulness to you!

Also, ask Him to strengthen you if/when you are faced with something like that!

2. In this passage, Jesus spends a lot of time on the hatred and persecution that His disciples should expect.

First of all what is the reason He gives them that they should expect to be hated/persecuted?

In the way He describes this, He is giving instruction, encouragement, and prophesying to them about what is to come.

How do we see Him specifically instructing them, encouraging them, and prophesying to them all in this one instance?

What is the call of the disciple of Jesus in the face of such hatred and persecution?

(i.e. how are we to respond?)

What is the role of the Helper (i.e. The Holy Spirit) in the midst of this?

How does He help those who follow Jesus when it comes to obeying this specific command of our Lord?

3. As you read through these verses, how do you see each person of the Trinity not only mentioned, but actively at work?

The Father -

The Son -

The Holy Spirit -

Consider the topic that Jesus is speaking of - the hatred of the world toward Him & those who follow Him:

How does it encourage you to know that all three members of the Godhead are at work in the lives of His people?

How does it encourage you specifically knowing that He's at work even when persecution comes?

In John 15:20 - he specifically states:

"If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours."

How does this statement simultaneously warn and encourage all who follow Jesus?

What does he appeal to in order to state this case (it's the same phrase he said in John 13 after washing their feet).

Why is it important to recognize the status of the disciples as "friends" and "servants" of Jesus (as seen in ch. 15)?

4. Jesus gives His "purpose statement" in John 16:1

What reason does He give for stating all of these things?

What further reason does He provide for why these people will treat them with such contempt (see v.3)?

How does what He's shared with them actually "keep them from falling away."?

Why is it important for the disciples to remember His words in light of what is about to take place within the next 24 hours?

5. If these statements have been made to his disciples, what kind of application do they have in our lives today?

How are we to be encouraged and empowered by His Words here?

Are there specific ways that we might be faced with the temptation to deny Christ and His Word and conform to the world?

What are some of the potential ways that you could foresee this happening in our place and time?

What are some tangible and concrete steps that you can take today to strengthen you to stand firm if/when this comes?

(consider Matthew 4:1-11, John 15:1-17, Galatians 5, & Ephesians 6:10-20)

5. Below are the "So What?" statements from the end of the sermon.

Do any of these particularly encourage, convict, challenge, you, and if so, how?

1. For Jesus' followers, hatred/persecution may come.

2. The Holy Spirit will testify & so must Christ's disciples!

3. Whenever attacks come, remain steadfast in Christ!