

John Ch 15:16-27

“Hope In A Hateful World”

Vs16

As we fall back into the flow here we've focused our time as of late upon the love of Jesus Christ for His own. He's said things like, “As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.” “This is My commandment that you love one another, as I have loved you.” and We noted that the way that Jesus has (ultimately) loved us is in a manner that is self-sacrificing. That we are the objects of His dying love, and that greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. and That by this we know love, that Jesus laid down His life for us, and even so (the bible says) we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. We read in the book of Galatians “...*let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*” Gal 6:9-10 Or to understand that another way, any time the opportunity arises to lay down our lives for the brethren, we do well to do just that. The type love with which Jesus has loved us is one that which lays down it's life for others, it's self sacrificing.

But as we step into vs 16 we also realize that it's a love that takes the initiative. Jesus says here, “You didn't choose Me, I chose you.” We weren't looking for God, God was looking for us. The bible says, “*The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.*” Ps 14:2-3 and Again in perhaps a bit more familiar portion of scripture, “*There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.*” Rom 3:10-11 and So therefore God has sought after you, Jesus said, “*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*” Matt 13:45-46 and Of course you're the pearl, and Jesus sought you out, and bought you at a great price, it took everything He had, the shedding of His blood, the breaking of His body, and Jesus *recognizing* the value in you gave all that He had, to purchase your redemption. Paul, in teaching on moral purity in the book of Cor said you are not your own, “*For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*” 1 Cor 6:20 The love of God takes the initiative, and so we see in this vs the balance of both divine initiative, and human responsibility.

There are 5 things about this vs that I would have you to see before we move on from here. We've just noted divine initiative and human responsibility, and so we see the break down and the balance of that in a 5 fold way here in this vs, 2 things regarding the divine initiative, and 3 things regarding human responsibility.

As for the Divine initiative, notice them there #1 Jesus said, "I chose you," and #2 He "appointed you." "I chose you," means that if you know Jesus Christ you've been *elect*, and "appointed you," means you've been *ordain*, the prerogative of *elect* and *ordain* belong to God. and Of course it's always a sensitive subject to begin to wade out into because the bible teaches emphatically both the sovereign election of God and the personal choice and freewill of man. But as for God's election, there are those who have a real problem with the idea of God's election, but you need to understand that no where in the bible do the scriptures apologize for the fact that God chooses those with whom He will initiate a relationship with and so I'm not going to apologize for that either. But I'm sure thankful that God chose to initiate a relationship with me! and I have a suspicion that you are to, and you can trust that if you're here and you don't know Jesus Christ that God is seeking to initiate a relationship with you to or else (believe me) you wouldn't be here.

The bible says that God is, "...not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9 and So we need to understand something about the heart of God and that is, if it were up to Him, no one would be lost, but yet He doesn't violate the freewill of man and so if you choose to reject Jesus Christ then that's up to you, but God elects *no one* for hell. But it's sort of an effort of vanity for us to try and wrap our brains around all the nuances of election and freewill, and see how they work together because the bottom line is that God's ways are not our ways. The bible says that His thoughts are not our thoughts, and as high as the heavens are above the earth, so far are His thoughts above our thoughts.

It's impossible that I should think like God thinks, and so the basis by which God elects is beyond me, this much I do know, it has nothing to do *with* me. In Rom Ch 9 when Paul was speaking about Jacob and Esau, and utilizing them as an example in God's election he said, "(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), it was said to her, 'The older shall serve the younger.'" Rom 9:11-12 So that Jacob wasn't chosen over Esau because of some merit that Jacob possessed that Esau didn't, neither one of them had been born, and if were about me, then I would have something in which I could boast. Now surely God knows the end from the beginning and so He makes choices accordingly, it would be foolish not to, and Peter tells us that God's election is based in His foreknowledge. As he was writing to those who would receive his 1st epistle as he greeted them he acknowledged that they were, "*elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,*" 1 Peter 1:2

If you were about to get married, and you were given the foresight to know that that person was only going to, drag you in the dirt for years, destroy your life, and then leave you, you probably wouldn't elect them to be your spouse. Yet we want to fault God for exercising His wisdom and His foresight in His choices, but if you see the wisdom in that for your life, how much more is God going to employ His attributes to make appropriate choices? and If you *know* Jesus Christ don't wrestle with it, rejoice in it, God has chosen you.

Which leads us to this 2nd point here, *why* has God chosen you? Believe me when I tell you that it goes way beyond a personal perk for you to revel in while people around you slip off the planet with out Jesus. Remember, God's not willing that *any* should perish. and So Jesus says, "I chose you, and (#2) *appointed* you." So that "chosen" speaks of election, but "appointed" tells us that we were elected for a purpose, this word "appointed" speaks of plan, and purpose. There is no one who's come to know Jesus Christ for their own personal gain and that's it. If God has elected you, it's because He has a plan and a purpose for you, He wants to put you to work in His vineyard, in some way and in some capacity.

The Wycliffe Bible Commentary said at this point, "Lest the disciples get the impression that they alone were in the plans of God, Christ now made clear that they had been granted their privileged position with a view to their declaring the message to others. They had been chosen, not with a view to their own pleasure or pride. Rather, Christ ordained (appointed) them with service in mind. Go . . . bring forth fruit." Lest we somehow get the idea that *we* alone are in the plans of God, let it be clear that God has chosen *you*, and chosen *me*, with service in mind. He has *appointed* us, or *ordained*, us. Every single person that comes into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ needs to understand that that in and of itself is not the end; God has elected you with a purpose in mind for your life. and It's important that we seek that out, and walk in it, rather than just taking the attitude, "Shew, that was close, glad *I'm* in, too bad for the rest of them sad saps out there." God told Jeremiah, "*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.*" Jer 1:5 Before you were formed in the womb God knew you, and He set you apart, and ordained you, or appointed you for a purpose and a plan that we're to seek *out*, and walk *in*. Paul said, "*...we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*" Eph 2:10

God has ordained you, that you should walk in His plan and His purpose for your life. Do you understand that anyone whom God has chosen He has ordained, you're all ordained ministers before God. Man's ordination means about as much before God as the piece of paper it's written on. and It qualifies you for nothing, but God's ordination qualifies you for whatever purpose He's called you to. and He doesn't ordain everyone to be a missionary, or a pastor, or whatever; we're ordained in various capacities. Remember the demon possessed man that Jesus delivered and he wanted to follow Jesus with the rest of the disciples, but Jesus said no. He said, "Go back and tell your friends what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He's had compassion upon you." He hadn't ordained him to be a circuit preacher; He wanted him to minister to his friends, his family, and his hometown. If everyone gets sent out, then who'll carry on the work at home? So God appoints us to various things, but the point is, it's His prerogative to elect, and to appoint, that's the divine initiative.

What's the human responsibility? #1 That you should go and bear fruit, #2 That your fruit should remain, and #3 That whatever you ask the Father in My name (Jesus said) He may give you. Now as for bearing fruit, we've spent significant time on that the last few weeks so you might grab a cd from a couple weeks ago. #2 Is worth pointing out, "That your fruit should remain." The difference between fruit and a manufactured product is that fruit has the seeds in it to produce more fruit; the manufactured product of the flesh will never last. It's God's heart that the fruit that we bear be lasting fruit, so that whether it be in good works, tenderheartedness, giving, leading people to Christ, or whatever, that those things be consistent and on going in our lives.

In another respect when it comes to leading people to Christ, that's why discipleship is so important, it's why we have the new believers 8-10 week course that we encourage people to take part in. Because what's the point in reeling a fish into the boat only to have it flop out the other side? You want that person to become established, rooted and grounded, that they might begin to produce fruit themselves and be effective, lasting instruments in the hands of God. and Then #3 brings back the subject of prayer, and we've talked about this as well recently. But Jesus is basically saying that as Christ is at work *in* you, and His Spirit is flowing *through* you, that you'll have an audience with God whereby God will respond *to* you to give you those things that are on the heart of Jesus *in* you. 1 John tells us, "*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*" 1 John 5:14-15

Vs17

So this rounds out this portion of Jesus' conversation that deals with His love, it began there in vs 9 and finishes here in vs17. and You would think that the person who was abiding in Christ's love, who was filled with Christ's Joy, would be someone whom the world would embrace. Full of love, full of joy, self-sacrificing, self-denying, taking the initiative to be last in a given situation and place the needs of others before one's own, I mean who doesn't like to be around someone like that? Yet Jesus makes it clear here that the one who exudes His love, will be objects of the world's hate. Much like the sermon on the Mt there in Matt ch 5, if you possess the qualities that Jesus calls blessed, as you follow that flow you realize that they culminate in being persecuted by the world. and It shouldn't really surprise us, because if they persecuted Jesus, then what makes us think that we shouldn't be persecuted when we seek to lead Christ like lives? It's going to happen, and so Jesus offers a bit of consolation here when He says in vs 18 (read).

John tells us in the 1st ch that Jesus came to His own, and His own did not receive Him, the God of creation came to His own creation and His own creation rejected Him. Why? Because Jesus is the light of the world, but men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, and so when the light comes on and exposes them in their sin situation they've got no shroud of darkness in which to hide, and so they become hostile, desire to snuff out the light. and That's what they sought to do with Jesus; they turned hostile towards Him, tried to extinguish the light. and So Jesus is saying here that when people begin to turn hostile towards you, don't feel like you're all alone in that, it happened to Me 1st (remember He's just hours from the cross) and He's telling them that the hostility will move from the Shepherd to the sheep. and So let it serve to you as evidence that you're walking *after* Me, in a manner that accords *with* Me.

Vs19

Do yourself a favor, underline the phrase, "You are not of the world." Now with all this talk here about, "The world" I guess we'd do well to establish what He's talking about. He's not talking simply about planet earth, but rather the society that's apart *from* God therefore in opposition *to* God. Thayer's Greek Lexicon states, "the ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ" Warren Wiersbe says, "'The world' from a Christian point of view involves all the people, plans organizations, activities, philosophies, values, etc. that belong to society without God." That's why John told us, "*Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world.*" 1 John 2:15-16 Now if you were of the world, they would love you, if you were supplying all the debauchery in their circle of sin, hey, you'd be Mr. Cool. But because you expose their sin, rather than endorse their sin, they hate you; you're not of the world. In the world not of the world, and so be careful that the way you lead your life demonstrates that you're not of the world.

Peter tells us, "*...we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles -- when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.*" 1 Peter 4:3 That's not who you are anymore, Jesus has called you out of that stuff, to lead your life set apart to Him, so people hate you. and It's really not you that they hate (Jesus is saying here) it's Christ in you that they hate. Before Christ was in you, there was no problem, but now people look at you different, treat you different, ostracize you and steer clear of you. Remember when Samuel was all bummed because the people of Israel wanted a king, but Samuel tried to persuade them otherwise, but the people argued with him, refused to listen to him, and so he took it personally. But God said, "*Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.*" 1 Sam 8:7 and That's what Jesus is saying here, it's not you so much that they hate, you're just the delivery boy that they're taking issue with, the reality is that it's Christ in you that they've rejected.

Vs20

You see Jesus is trying to set a buffer before you so that you won't think it strange when all these fiery trials begin to try you; no servant is above his Master. and If they persecuted Jesus (which they did) then they'll persecute those in whom He dwells as well, Paul said, "...*all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*" 2 Tim 3:12 But there were also those who responded to His voice, and repented of their sin, and stepped out of the darkness and into the light. and Jesus is saying, there's going to be those who'll respond to the message through you as well. The point being that if we share in His sufferings, we'll also share in His glory, (Rom 8:17).

Vs21

Notice Jesus says, "For My names sake." The blessing comes from being persecuted for His names sake, not from being obnoxiously weird. There's no reward in that, but if you're persecuted for His names sake, then great is your reward. Jesus said, "*Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*" Matt 5:11-12 When you're persecuted for sake of the name of Jesus, rejoice, you're in good company.

Vs22-24

The world's hatred of you, or maybe I should say, Christ in you can all be narrowed down to one thing, perhaps you noticed it there in vs 22. What's the bottom line? "Now they have no excuse for their sin." Vs22 speaks loudly to the fact that the Word of God brings about accountability in people's lives. The bible says to whom much is given, much is required, and when the word of God enters into the equation of your life, you're accountable before God. and Notice vs 23, God the Father and God the Son are a package deal. How many times do you run across someone, or a religious sect, and it's not God they have a problem with, it's Jesus that they take issue with. But Jesus says here, no go. You can not take issue with Jesus with out taking issue with the Father, it doesn't matter what you may do or what group you may associate with, if you take issue with Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the only begotten Son of God who is the way the truth and the life and the only access to God the Father, than you're not right with God. You hate Jesus, or have a problem with Jesus, than you have a problem with God, you hate God, that's what the bible teaches.

In vs 24 we see the *works* of Jesus bring about accountability as well, and all along Jesus has called upon man to believe in Him because of His Word, and because of His works which ratify and verify His word. But the Works are always 2^{ndary} to the Word. Jesus calls upon His *word* 1st, and then His works. God honors His Word above His name. But once you've heard the word of God, witness the work of Jesus Christ in someone's life, you've heard, and you've seen and you're placed in that pocket whereby you're forced to make a choice. and So many have heard the word of His love, have witnessed the work of His love, and have chosen to set themselves against Jesus Christ and Choose to hate Him, and the Father.

Vs25

Why do people hate Jesus, why are they hostile against Jesus? There is no reason, no just cause, He's done nothing but lay down His life for the sin of the world that by believing in Him we might have everlasting life, and yet people choose to hate Him.

Vs26-27

That is, from the beginning of His ministry, that's why when Judas was being replaced they made it mandatory that the apostle that was chosen be one who had been with Jesus from the inception of His ministry. But Paul the apostle was God's choice as one born out of due time. But we notice the fingerprints of the trinity in vs 26, Jesus mentioning Himself, the Helper (that is the Spirit of truth) whom He shall send from the *Father*. and The help that He will give is that which empowers them to be the witness of Jesus Christ whom God has called them to be. and That's the power that He avails to you and to me as well. One final note, notice the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to testify of Jesus Christ The Holy Spirit glorifies, and magnifies Jesus.

So let that be to you a barometer of discernment regarding the fingerprints of the Holy Spirit on a given situation. If something is happening in a gathering that takes your attention off the person of Jesus, and places it on some other individual, and you've been distracted from the Lord, that was not prompted by nor being performed by the Holy Spirit. Because He will always with out exception glorify, magnify, and testify of Jesus Christ and as we spend time with Him, then we'll begin to bear witness of Him as well. and That's what God desires of us, that we would spend time with Jesus, that we might be a witness of Jesus, and have hope in a hateful world, *"This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, We shall also reign with Him."* 2 Tim 2:11-12 Greater is He who is in you, than he that is of this world.

The present sufferings of this world aren't worthy to be compared to the glory that's to be revealed in you. You just abide in Christ, abide in His love, let His word abide in you, allow the Holy Spirit to use your life as a witness of Jesus Christ to bear witness of Him, testify of Him, honor Him, magnify Him and glorify Him by His work in your life, and great will be your reward.

Let me just encourage you that if you're here and you've never invited Jesus into your life, you can count on this, you're here because God is reaching out to you, seeking to make Himself real to you, and He's initiating a relationship with you. He's taking the initiative, now it's up to you to respond to His call to come out of the world and be separate unto Him. and So if Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart and you desire to open it, and let Him in, than why don't you do that today, and be forgiven of your sin?