

Being hated, fearless, assured

John 15:18-27 (NKJV)

“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 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 keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’ “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”

Jesus spoke to His disciples and some things were particularly for them in that time. But most of it can be applied to His disciples today.

Three things that can be extracted:

1. Being hated.
2. Being fearless.
3. Being assured.

Being hated

This is not for the sake of being hated (slamming the Bible in people’s face like a Pharisee, being a foolish hypocrite), but look at what Jesus says: “If you really belong to Me, you’re marked, you’re going to get it.” Jesus showed the greatest amount of humility there is. He preached truth and love and yet they reviled Him. If anyone deserved to be loved it was Jesus and yet they killed Him! For His name’s sake we, His disciples, will be treated the same way. If you need some real-life proof for this: look at China, Korea, Iran, Pakistan or any other country where Christian brothers/sisters are persecuted and suffering for His name’s sake. The encouragement is found in Matthew 5:11 “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.”

Being fearless

Proverbs 29:25 “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.”

On your job you might feel the need to be the nice “Joe” or “Jane”. But it’s simple: get out of your mind wanting to be loved. I don’t mean that you shouldn’t be known for doing a good job or a being a loyal, honest, hard worker. Deeds matter and are essential. But what I do mean is: don’t go around walking on eggs when it comes to being a witness in word. That implies that you must present the Gospel as plain it is. And yes, you will meet adversaries, since you come and take away what is dear to them: their self-made security. This security consists of peace with their sins or a sense of self-righteousness, usually a combination of both...But you, you are messenger of the message of the cross and they will perceive it as offensive. And Jesus implicitly says: “Have no fear.” Why?

Being assured

Why? The Holy Spirit. I’ll repeat. The Holy Spirit. He is the absolute certainty that you are not alone in this war. Indeed, that means you cannot rely on your own eloquence, bluff, knowledge or anything of yourself. He needs to be in charge if you want to survive. Submit to Him. He will instruct you, help you to be silent and speak at the right moments, He will give you the words.

To wrap it up: be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you.