

Hated Without A Cause

By: Steven J. Wallace

"Those who hate me without a cause Are more than the hairs of my head; They are mighty who would destroy me, Being my enemies wrongfully; Though I have stolen nothing, I still must restore it" (Ps. 69:4, emp. added, sjw)

- **This Was Applied to Christ**

"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" (Jn. 15:24, 25)

When Jesus walked and taught in the manner of the Father, the world despised Him. They falsely accused Him of "having a demon" or being "mad" because they didn't want to accept the truth which He revealed to them and in them, "And many of them said, 'He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?'" (Jn. 10:20). Men often have to revolt to abusive name calling when they cannot answer but desire to contradict the truth. It is "abusive" because it wrongfully mislabels; it is "dismissive" because they deem that it dismisses and undermines his teaching and credibility.

It is like one Baptist who dismissed a challenge to his "bapti-slide" (a tall slide that baptismal subjects can use to make the act of baptism more fun) by labeling me as a "fruit inspector" who espouses a "joyless interpretation of the gospel." Regardless, after all the mud has been slung, he still cannot find support from the scriptures to make a church baptistery into a water park!

- **Something His true disciples would experience.**

"Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake" (Lk. 6:22). As one commentator said, "The Acts of the Apostles is a commentary on this prophecy" (*Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures*). Indeed your eyes can witness the reproaching manner of men upon the names of Christ's faithful heralds by reading the Book of Acts.

- **Those who are worldly despise those who are not.**

"I have given them Your word; **and the world has hated them because they are not of the world**, just as I am not of the world" (Jn. 17:14). There is no cause for hate here other than the incompatibility and confrontational war that exists between the two mindsets. Those who are of Christ's true seed love righteousness and seek not to mix light with darkness. They refrain from walking like the world, talking like the world, dressing, dancing and drinking with the world (1 Pet. 4:1-5). Those who are worldly minded therefore hate those who are not (cf. Rom. 8:7).

Sometimes there are casualties in war and those who have escaped the world become entangled in it again (2 Pet. 1:4; 2:20; 2 Tim. 4:10). This latter state is worse than the beginning. They are harder to retrieve because of their "entanglement" and also bring disappointment and division into the church by their abandonment. John referred to some who were once with them and then left as "antichrists" and "the spirit of error." After all, a "spade" is a "spade" is it not? Some of their identifying marks were the cloning characteristics of the world (the entanglement of worldliness) and the non-receptive tone that they displayed toward those speaking the truth. He exhorted those who remained faithful, saying, "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 Jn. 4:4-6).

Hate and love are *often* displayed in how we talk about those who are doing good works. When we are "a lover of what is good" (Titus 1:8, NKJV) we become a "lover of good men" (Titus 1:8, KJV). Loving what is true enables us to speak words of edification to build good men up (Eph. 4:29). Likewise, the worldly-minded loathe, gossip, and revile those who walk the line. Make no mistake about it; hate can reveal itself in "reviling." That is taking the good and the name of another and gnashing at it with the teeth.

- **The vastness of haters**

One more thought resonates from David's Psalm 69:4—the multitude of haters, "Those who hate me without a cause *are more than the hairs of my head...*" (emp. mine, sjw). It should be safe to assume that David was not bald and therefore had a host of enemies! Is it not truth today as well? I have made far more enemies walking with Christ and preaching righteousness than the time when I was content to dwell in darkness. This is exactly what Jesus said would happen as "...men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed" (Jn. 3:19, 20). Such is not a cause to grow bitter or calloused against man or Jesus, but rather to become joyful and imitate Christ who when he was reviled did not revile in return (1 Pet. 2:23). Be joyful not that men hate you and the truth, but that you are worthy to partake of Christ's suffering as well as qualified to receive His reward. "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).