

Haters Gonna Hate

Word

Scripture Reference

John 15:18-16:4

Discussion Questions:

1. On what grounds do people usually hate each other?
2. “Haters gonna hate” is a statement one uses to acknowledge that there will always be people in the world that simply don’t like or agree with you, implying that you don’t care about pleasing the “haters” because there is no way to please them anyway. While most Christians living in countries that actively (and sometimes brutally) persecute them boldly stand up for their faith in the Lord, Christians in other parts of the world who have more freedom to practice their faith instead try to get the world to love and accept them. Read John 15:18-16:4. This passage tells us that the world hates the disciples or the followers of Christ. Who is “the world?” Why is it getting harder to live out your faith and make a stand for it? Why are some non-Christians hostile toward Christianity? Are you affected by what others say about your faith? How do you respond to their criticism?
3. How do you as a believer transform your attitude so you can take on these criticisms and turn what people say about you into compliments?
4. Jesus gave His disciples warnings about two realities before He was nailed on the cross. **REALITY #1 is that the world hates you because you are not on its side (v. 15:18-20).** The world says, “You are either with us or against us.” What did Jesus like for His disciples to keep in mind (v. 18)? Why does the world hate Jesus’ followers (v. 19)? What should Jesus’ followers remember (v. 20)? How does the world in this generation exhibit its hatred for God?
5. The disciples perhaps thought that they were exempted from the hate of the world (v. 20). Some Christians probably think that they are also exempted from this kind of hate, and so they would love the world that hates them and reject the God who loved and chose them (v. 19). But the fact remains that the world hates you because you are not one of them. Examine your Christian walk. Have you ever been a recipient of dislike or hate because of your faith in Jesus Christ? If not, share and discuss how you can take a stand for Jesus.
6. There are two lies that this contemporary culture embraces, sadly even by some Christians.
 - a. *LIE #1: If you disagree with the way someone lives, you must hate them.* Because of the difference in your opinion, you are a bigot, intolerant, unaccepting, unloving. Discuss how the world has been living out this lie. How does this affect the followers of Christ? How do you protect yourself from this lie?
 - b. *LIE #2: If you love someone, just accept him or her and agree with whatever they believe or do.* As a Christian, why can’t you possibly agree to this lie? Discuss how this is unacceptable to God and as His child should be unacceptable to you? Why do many Christians play the approval game (wanting to be liked and accepted) and succumb to this lie? Whose approval should you desire? Why?
7. **REALITY #2 is that the world hates Jesus because the world does not understand and like God (v.21).** It is because Jesus came to convict the world of sin (v. 22). Discuss how the world shows that it doesn’t want to be told of its sin and made to feel guilty? Share how you have reacted to correction and admonition of the Word of God. Have you ever thanked God for correcting you? Do you honor God with your words, but mock Him by the way you live your life? How is that different from the way the world mocks Him? How does Jesus call His people to live their lives (v. 24-25)? How did the world react to Jesus’ call? Do you side with Jesus even when the rest of the world reacts with hate?

Walk

Jesus Christ promised that the Holy Spirit will be with His followers. However, you still need to be prepared to suffer and sacrifice for His sake (v. 26-16:4). What are you willing to sacrifice in order to live for Christ? Do you love Him with all of your heart? If you do, then you will follow His will. Without settling this question in your heart, it will be so difficult to give up the world. Are you willing to surrender the obstacles that hinder you from completely loving God with all of your heart? Are you more concerned about how the world will perceive you instead of how God is being pleased in your life? What should you do about it?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word that reminds me of who I am, and who I belong to. I am a sinner saved by grace through faith in Your Son Jesus Christ. I am no longer of this world. Yet many times I act like I belong here. I make decisions that do not please You. I seek approval from friends and loved ones instead of looking to You. I seek acknowledgement from “important people” and forget that in Your eyes I am already precious, worth the life of Your Son. Forgive me, Father. I ask for courage to boldly proclaim You by how I live my life regardless of what people say. Grant me gentleness in words and behavior so that people who dislike/hate me because of my faith may find love, grace, and acceptance like You have shown me. In Jesus’ name. Amen.