

When Good News is not received

△ John 15:18-16:4a

Introduction

Our context Post modern & Post Christian

John's gospel's context: Jesus & Disciples part of the normal Jewish culture

Note: "They" or "the Jews" = religious authorities

not - the Jewish people, but the ruling class

We need to read this passage as it was meant form them and then interpolate this for us in our culture

The passage

The world hates and persecutes the disciples

△ John 15::18-21

The disciples are now the friends and servants / slaves of Jesus

They represent Jesus in the world

Therefore like Jesus is persecuted and about to be crucified

They can expect the same treatment

And they did receive the same treatment

A lot of the apostles were persecuted and imprisoned or even executed

The guilt of the world

△ John 15:22-25

Here the context of the world is the Jewish people and the Jewish authorities

It is they that have sinned as Jesus presented himself to them as the Son of God

Sin in John's Gospel

Sin in the Gospel of John's terms is not only doing things wrong

It is not accepting Jesus as the Son of God

And therefore rejecting the Father as well

This is particular for the Jewish people as Jesus has presented himself to them and they rejected him and therefore the Father

Once you have accepted Jesus as your Lord (remain in me as I remain in you)

all the other sins will be addressed

when we are being sanctified

The witness of the paraclete

^ John 15:26-27

However, this does not mean that Jesus will leave them to sort them out on their own

He sends the Paraclete - the Holy Spirit

Interlude: Paraclete: One called alongside to help.

Functions: Advocate, Witness, Helper, Friend, Counselor, (Comforter, Consolator, Interpreter, Encourager, Intercessor, Mediator)

So here the Paraclete witnesses/testifies

And the disciples will testify because they have been with Jesus,

But also because the Paraclete enables them to witness/testify

The near future persecution of the Disciples

^ John 16:1-4a

This passage then describes the near future for the disciples after Jesus has been crucified

Putting out of synagogues

they will be killed

and the killers believe that they do God's will

Like Saul did before he met Jesus and was renamed to Paul

Why - because the Jewish authorities

do not know the Father or Jesus

But Jesus gives them this warning so that they can be prepared for it.

The interpolation for today

The world still hates Christians?

More and more

Post Christian society

Politically correct: Everyone goes to heaven

A challenge of that is soon seen as hate speech

The world still has guilt

Sin in John's Gospel

Again sin is not focused on behaviour, but on rejecting Jesus and the Father

While in the past someone could claim that the UK was a Christian nation

But more and more it becomes clear that they have rejected Christ and the Father

And live their lives accordingly to that worldview

The religious authorities

There is now more division in the church about what the gospel means

Secularisation is also affecting the church's thinking

Some have difficulty with that Jesus is the truth and the life and the only way

to the Father

Some churches focus more on the morality of Jesus than on his saving grace

One questions if they really know the Father and Jesus

This is a tension that we have in our current Church life. In the URC and in Canterbury

And it is difficult to navigate

The Advocate is still with us!

We are not alone

The Paraclete the Holy Spirit is still with us

He still witness to Jesus Christ, with us and through us

We can take heart of this

But also we need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us

As we cannot do this on our own

Love vs Hate

But we also have to remember why the world hates Christ

Because he extends his love to them

It is easy to respond to hate with hate

And that is the world's way

But we do not belong to the world, we belong to Jesus and the Kingdom of

God

It is by testifying to and demonstrating Jesus love to the world, that this is the response (in general)

But we are to respond with Love

I gave you this command that so that you may love one another

[^]v17

For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that whoever believes in him may have eternal life

And therefore like the Father and Jesus loves the world, we also need to love the world and respond to the world with love, even though hate may be returned

Do not isolate

One response would be to isolate ourselves - become a nice Christian island in the see of non or anti Christianity

But that is not what Jesus wants us to do

If that was the case the disciples would not be persecuted, as a little island won't affect the world

No we are to be salt and light in the world

We are to be in the world, while we are not off the world

We need to be out there, and not in here

Yes, we can come here in order to be rested, strengthened, and comforted

But Jesus calls us to be out there

To witness and to let the Holy Spirit witness through you

That is scary

It was scary for the disciples

But we, like them, have the Holy Spirit too - the Paraclete

Amen.
