



WEEKLY STUDY

Week 3

If what Jesus says is true, the world will hate me.

If what Jesus says is true, I will be persecuted.

If what Jesus says is true, regardless of the suffering, I must testify.

These are hard words, but they also open us up to a new understanding of our role in the world as followers of Jesus. If we follow Jesus, we will cut against the grain. We will not follow in the ways of the world around us. That will cost us. My prayer for you this week is that you will be emboldened by the power of Christ working through you so that you will be ready to testify to his goodness.

Peace of Christ,
Dr. Mark Youngman
Pastor of Discipleship

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt. You might also pray this prayer of confession that we prayed at the end of the message.

Jesus, I believe that what you say is true. You are the truth. Therefore I ask for your strength to live in a world that sees your ways as curious, offensive, and even threatening. I want to follow you and testify to your saving grace and Way of love. Amen.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: JOHN 15.18-21

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.²⁰ Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they

will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.²¹ They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me.

- Jesus shared these words with his disciples to warn and encourage them. He knew that followers of his would face difficulties. The ways of the world are at odds with the Way of Jesus. It's no wonder why many Christians throughout the centuries have sought a way to escape the world of persecution. But Jesus says that his followers are chosen *out* of the world while still living *in* it. The movement Jesus ignited operates like a mustard seed— small, but grows and impacts the world around it. Are you willing to wear the name of Jesus even though the world may treat you as it did him?
- *God give me today the strength I need to faithfully follow Jesus. I wear his name not as a privilege but as a servant living in the way of the master. May your Kingdom come through me in small or big ways today.*

TUESDAY: JOHN 17:14-19

I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.¹⁹ For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

- Jesus' prayer for his disciples reveals his deep love for them and his passion for the mission he proclaimed when he unrolled the scroll and announced the coming of God's Kingdom (Luke 4:17-21). In difficult seasons, we can be tempted to pack up our loved ones and head for the hills. Wouldn't it be great to launch a rocket ship to a better place? This world is broken which is exactly why Jesus prays, "not that you would take them out of the world but that you would protect them from the evil one." If Jesus prays that over us, and if what Jesus says is true, we have protection from the evil one. We don't have to flee from the broken world. We are right where God needs us. How do you deal with the temptation to run away from the world?
- *Father God, you offer protection to those of us who live in the dust of the earth. Breathe life into us, sanctify us by the truth of your word.*

WEDNESDAY: JOHN 15:26-27

"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

- When Jesus gave instructions to his disciples, he made it clear that in order to effectively testify about Jesus, they would need to depend on the Holy Spirit. It's why the first disciples waited in the upper room for Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1-2). But when that power comes, we must testify. If you have been with Jesus, and have experienced the Holy Spirit, it is time to testify. What does that look like in your life today?
- *God, thank you for the gift of the Spirit that empowers me to share about Jesus. Be my inspiration as I live in this world today.*

THURSDAY: 2 CORINTHIANS 5.1-9

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling,³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.⁵ Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.⁷ For we live by faith, not by sight.⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.⁹ So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

- The apostle Paul wrote these words that recognize the human condition. Restlessness and longing for a better existence is normal because we are not yet living in our heavenly home. It's important to name the groaning we experience here, and that it's a sign of better things to come. If we weren't groaning, we would be accepting the status quo of this world. Wherever we are, our goal is to please God with our lives.
- *Jesus, you have pointed me to my heavenly home. I've seen glimpses of it through your life, death and resurrection. Help me to live as one who has hope even while I may groan in this life.*

FRIDAY: 1 JOHN 2.15-17

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

- There is so much to love about this world that God has created. There is much to enjoy and delight in. But the way of the world (described here as lust and pride) is not to be loved. If we pursue the way of the world, we will not be pursuing God. All that lust and pride leave us with is emptiness. Doing the will of God leads us to eternal life. Consider in what ways your heart is enamored with the way of the world. Pray for a steady desire for God's will for your life.
- *God, reset my misguided and misaligned desires. I want to want only you!*

SATURDAY: EPHESIANS 2.1-7

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

- If we find ourselves dead in our sins and following the ways of the world, there is hope. We have hope to be made alive again and saved from our sins. God raised up Jesus so that we could be raised up out of our transgressions. How has this week's teachings impacted your view of the world and your role in it?
- *Father God, I praise you for the gift of my salvation in Jesus. Bring me back to life!*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Here are the "If what Jesus says is true..." take-aways from this week.

- **If what Jesus says is true, the world will hate me.**
 - **If what Jesus says is true, I will be persecuted.**
 - **If what Jesus says is true, regardless of the suffering, I must testify.**
1. After listening to the message this week, how do you understand the phrase "the world will hate me"? Is the whole of creation that hates you? All of the people on earth? Or is it the way of the world—the systems and status quo that seem to be at odds with the Way of Jesus?
 2. Are there places where you see that you are already being persecuted in the world around you because of your faith in Jesus Christ?
 3. How is your life currently testifying to Jesus? What could you do to boost that testimony?