

April 21, 2024

Acts 23:12-35

“Do Not Be Surprised That The World Hates You”

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Luke 6:22-23, “Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you, insult you, and slander your name as evil because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy. Take note-your reward is great in heaven, for this is the way their ancestors used to treat the prophets.”

John 16:1-2, “I have told you these things to keep you from stumbling. They will ban you from the synagogue. In fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering service to God.”

John 15:18-21, “If the world hates you, understand that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you are not of this world, but I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you. Remember the word I spoke 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 also keep yours. But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they don’t know the one who sent me.”

II Timothy 3:12, “In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Here’s our hope, **Romans 8:35-39**, “Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Can affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: **Because of you we are being put to death all day long; we are counted as sheep to be slaughtered.** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who love us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” In this context, the word, “Hope,” can be defined as *assured expectation*.

Paul wrote to the Philippians, “For it has been granted to you on Christ’s behalf not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are engaged in the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I have.” **Philippians 1:29-30**.

Please see other side.

Application:

Beloved, as I was reading and studying for this sermon it was brought to my attention that this passage is not filled with lots of theological truths and deep doctrines of the faith. This pericope is descriptive of how Paul used government and citizenship as a part of his self-preservation. It also gives us a look into the way things were done under Roman law. So, as with all of Scripture there is much to be learned from such a passage as this. I was pondering this and as I did, suddenly a very apt application came to mind. We live in a world now like never before that is becoming hostile to the gospel of Jesus Christ. God’s chosen people, the Jews, are experiencing antisemitic pressure and threats as never before. Realizing this spiritual truth I determined to highlight just how much hate there was for the gospel from the outset of the finished work on the cross to this very day. So, what is our part? One, a huge step is for believers to immerse their minds in the Word of God like never before. In so doing we will better prepared to meet future challenges with confidence and with a ready response for what we believe. Second, constantly remind ourselves of the Great Commission found in **Matthew 28:19-20** and then make every effort to carry out our part of the commission in the

mission field in which the Lord has uniquely placed and equipped us to serve in. There are infinite actions we can take to live lives pleasing to the Lord. Third, consider all the promises the Lord has made you. Just like in this biblical account the Lord told Paul that he would bear witness in Rome so that emboldened him to be strong and very courageous on his perilous trip to Rome. God had said it and he believed Him. Fourth, be diligent on the area of your prayer life. This is a ministry that is essential to a Christian life lived well. Pray for yourself and pray for the welfare of others. Just look at our instructions in [Matthew 5:43-45](#), “You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor** and hate your enemy. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” Lastly, let me encourage you, as we see the day approaching to be diligent to make every effort to gather with other believers, see [Hebrews 10:23-25](#) for biblical instruction and encouragement.

All Scripture from the CSB