

## Lesson 155 - Why the world hates true Christians

There are a number of reasons why the world hates on true Christians and what they have some times done. The focus of the study is to become aware of these things while learning to realize that they are pretty much being controlled by the fallen angels. It may seem like personal attacks, but do keep in mind, who they are really hating on is Jesus. We are just the physical manifestation of Him that they target.

1. What are we not to do when we realize that the world hates true Christians? **1 John 3:13**

**EGW:** Like Israel, Christians too often yield to the influence of the world and conform to its principles and customs, in order to secure the friendship of the ungodly; but in the end it will be found that these professed friends are the most dangerous of foes. The Bible plainly teaches that there can be no harmony between the people of God and the world. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." 1 John 3:13. Our Saviour says, "Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." John 15:18. Satan works through the ungodly, under cover of a pretended friendship, to allure God's people into sin, that he may separate them from Him; and when their defense is removed, then he will lead his agents to turn against them and seek to accomplish their destruction. {PP 559.1}

2. What should we not look for in the haters to explain the reason they hate true Christians? **End of John 15:25**

**EGW:** We must not think that Satan will cease for one moment his efforts to do to Christ's followers as he did to Christ. "If the world hate you," Christ said, "ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. . . . This cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." Can those who claim to be followers of Christ say, with their Master, "They hated me without a cause"? {RH, April 19, 1898 par. 3}

3. What are true Christians chosen to do that causes people to hate on them? **John 15:19**

**EGW:** Jesus warned his disciples not to expect the commendation of the world. Said he, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Those who are of the same spirit with the world receive its smiles and approbation; but the humble disciples of Jesus were to suffer scorn and persecution. Jesus declared that they should be brought before kings and rulers for his name's sake, and whosoever should destroy their lives would be so deceived by Satan as to think they were doing God service. Every indignity and cruelty that the ingenuity of man could devise would be visited upon the followers of Christ. But in all their trials they were to remember that their Master had endured like reproach and suffering. They were to remember his words: "The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me." {3SP 91.3}

4. Who are they really hating, though true Christians feel the sting? **Romans 1:30**

**EGW:** Those who have access to God through Christ have important work before them. Now is the time to lay hold of the arm of our strength. The prayer of David should be the prayer of pastors and laymen: "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." Let the servants of the Lord weep between the porch and the altar, crying, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach." God has always wrought for his people in their greatest extremity, when there seemed the least hope that ruin could be averted. The designs of wicked men, the enemies of the church, are subject to his power and overruling providence. He can move upon the hearts of statesmen; the wrath of the turbulent and disaffected, the haters of God, of his truth and his people, can be turned aside, even as the rivers of water are turned, if he orders it thus. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. He who marshals the stars in order in the heavens, whose word controls the waves of the great deep,--the same infinite Creator will work in behalf of his people if they call upon him in faith. He will restrain the forces of darkness, until the warning is given to the world, and all who will heed it are prepared for the conflict. "The wrath of man shall praise Thee," says the psalmist; "the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain." God means that testing truth shall be brought to the front, and become a subject of examination and discussion, even if it is through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated. Every controversy, every reproach, every slander, will be God's means of provoking inquiry, and awakening minds that otherwise would slumber. {RH, December 11, 1888 par. 9}

5. And if they really hate Him, who are they also hating? **John 15:23**

**EGW:** "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." The friends of Christ's truth will ever be persecuted by a time-serving generation. They will be termed enthusiasts and fanatics by the enemies of reform. The burning truths of God's word, condemning sin, and admonishing to righteousness are not palatable to the wrong-doer. Every true follower of Christ should have the spirit of a martyr, being ready to sacrifice any and everything rather than forfeit the favor of God. {ST, February 7, 1878 par. 2}

6. For what simple sake can set such haters off? **Luke 21:17**

**EGW:** In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Paganism had given place to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority." [Revelation 13:2; SEE APPENDIX, NOTE 2.] And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. [Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5-7.] Christians were forced to choose, either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman's ax. Now were fulfilled the words of Jesus, "Ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." [Luke 21:16, 17.] Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battle-field. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: "The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." [Revelation 12:6.] {GC88 54.2}

7. What is it of Jesus that haters do not want Him to do? **End of Luke 19:14**

**EGW:** There has been a departure from God among us, and the zealous work of repentance and return to our first love essential to restoration to God and regeneration of heart has not yet been done. Infidelity has been making its inroads into our ranks; for it is the fashion to depart from Christ, and give place to skepticism. With many the cry of the heart has been, "We will not have this man to

reign over us." Baal, Baal, is the choice. The religion of many among us will be the religion of apostate Israel, because they love their own way, and forsake the way of the Lord. The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and rejected. It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism. But it is the life of Jesus Christ in the soul, it is the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make the soul fruitful unto good works. The love of Christ is the force and power of every message for God that ever fell from human lips. What kind of a future is before us, if we shall fail to come into the unity of the faith? {PH133 10.1}

8. Why would a supposed Christian hate a fellow human being? **1 John 4:20**

**EGW:** Jesus found himself surrounded by scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers, and the lawyer asked him, "Who is my neighbor?" To this question Jesus presented a parable that laid bare the sanctimonious pretensions of priests and Levites. With fearlessness and fidelity he exposed the false doctrine of those who taught the traditions of man, and disregarded the commandments of God. He illustrated what it means to love our neighbor as ourselves. But he also showed that this love will never be exercised by those who do not keep the first four precepts of the law. Where love to God is practiced, natural self-idolatry will not exist. No man can love God supremely unless he loves his neighbor as himself. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" Love to God is the golden chain that binds the ten precepts of Jehovah together. {ST, July 16, 1894 par. 7}

9. If a person does hate a fellow human being, what are they in? **1 John 2:11**

**EGW:** Many are not awake to the fact that the Lord is testing and proving them to make it manifest whether or not they really love Jesus. The spirit and attitude manifested to their brethren, tells their spirit and attitude toward God. Great dishonor is done to Jesus Christ by those who claim to be his disciples. Those who are not branches of the divine Root, who are not partakers of the divine nature, will not and cannot love those for whom Christ has given his life. The evidence that we are accepted in the Beloved, that we have passed from death unto life, is that we "love the brethren." "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." This is the decision of One who cannot lie. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know

that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." But notwithstanding these positive utterances, how little love is expressed among those who profess to be sons and daughters of God! "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" The inference to be drawn from this question is that it is impossible for one to have the love of God, and fail to have compassion for his fellow men. The love of Jesus in the heart will always be revealed in tender compassion for the souls of those for whom Christ paid so dear a price. "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. . . . And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." There is no such thing as a loveless Christian. He who is in unity with Christ, in word, in life, and in action, bears the living testimony that he has the mind and spirit of Christ. {HM, August 1, 1896 par. 3}

10. What does that (answer to the prior question) do to their eyes? **End of 1 John 2:11**

**EGW:** Those who claim to believe the truth should obey the Word of God just as it reads, practicing its instruction. Remember that those who love not their brethren, deny the faith. Many, because their brethren do not follow their leading, manifest toward them a spirit of hatred. God has never bidden us follow the leading of any man, and he has said, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whether he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." Can we not see from this what it means to be at variance? {GCB, July 1, 1900 par. 7}

11. What do such people who hate fellow human beings think they are in? **1 John 2:9**

**EGW:** Let heads of families look into their home life. Is this love exemplified in the family circle? Go farther in your self-examination: in your association with your brethren in church capacity, do you find unkindness, selfishness, or even dishonesty? Be sure that you examine and prove yourselves as Paul has directed: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves." In the light of God's word, search carefully whether you truly have the love of God in the heart. "This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you." "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now." {RH, November 16, 1886 par. 9}

12. What has been given to true Christians that causes the world to hate them? **John 17:14**

**EGW:** Those who have no love for God will not love the children of God. Listen to the words of Christ: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you." "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven." "But woe unto you that are rich; for ye have received your consolation." In the Gospel of John we read: "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you, out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." In his prayer for his disciples just before his crucifixion, Jesus said: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." {RH, May 26, 1885 par. 3}

13. As we live according to it (answer from the prior question), what will people think true Christians are no longer of? **John 17:14 (said thrice)**

**EGW:** Young men, deal faithfully and truly with your own souls. Seek the Lord most earnestly for grace and strength. Study the words of the Saviour: "I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Worldly ambition, worldly plans, worldly principles, are not to be brought into the life of the Christian. {20MR 124.2}

14. What is testified that causes the hatred of Jesus and His true followers? **John 7:7**

**EGW:** "Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for My time is not yet full come. When He had said these words unto them, He abode still in Galilee." His brothers had spoken to Him in a tone of authority, prescribing the course He should pursue. He cast their rebuke back to them, classing them

not with His self-denying disciples, but with the world. "The world cannot hate you," He said, "but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil." The world does not hate those who are like it in spirit; it loves them as its own. {DA 451.2}

15. What do those who do evil hate being placed before them? **Beginning of John 3:20**

**EGW:** Jesus said, "Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." There are many today pursuing a similar course. In the testimonies are specified the very sins of which they are guilty; hence they have no desire to read them. There are those who from their youth up have received warning and reproofs through the testimonies; but have they walked in the light and reformed?--Not at all. They still indulge the same sins; they have the same defects of character. These evils mar the work of God, and make their impress upon the churches. The work the Lord would do to set the churches in order is not done, because the individual members--and especially the leaders of the flock--would not be corrected. {1SM 46.5}

16. Why will they not come to it? **End of John 3:20**

**EGW:** The people are too willing to believe their teachers without careful thought and prayerful investigation of God's word. They love to have their consciences quieted,--love to be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. In their blind selfishness, they deceive themselves in those things wherein they are willing to be deceived. Our Saviour declared to the Pharisees, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." And in his conversation with Nicodemus he said, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." So in this age; the church will neither search the Scriptures nor listen to the truth, lest her works be reprov'd. She is more willing to depart from the commandments of God than from the customs and friendship of the world. And because great men and worldly wise men are in her favor, because numbers and temporal prosperity are hers, she believes herself favored of God,--"rich, and increased with goods, and in need of nothing." {ST, March 6, 1884 par. 5}

17. What is it that haters want to serve? **End of Luke 16:13**

**EGW:** God would have us learn the solemn lesson that we are working out our own destiny. The characters we form in this life decide whether or not we are fitted to live through the eternal ages. No man can with safety attempt to serve both God and Mammon. God is fully able to keep us in the world, but not of the world. His love is not uncertain and fluctuating. Ever he watches over his children with a care that is measureless and everlasting. But he requires us to give him our undivided allegiance. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and Mammon." {RH, February 1, 1906 par. 12}

18. What two things are haters willing to do to true Christians? **Luke 6:22**

**EGW:** (see comment for question 12)

19. How extensive is the hatred? **Matthew 24:9**

**EGW:** "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted," Christ continued, "and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." All this the Christians suffered. Fathers and mothers betrayed their children; children betrayed their parents; friends delivered their friends to the Sanhedrin. Until he himself was converted, Saul of Tarsus was exceedingly bitter against all who believed in Christ. He then began to preach Christ and him crucified, and the enemies of the gospel caused him and Silas to be whipped, and thrown into prison. {RH, December 20, 1898 par. 1}

20. What three things are to be our response to these haters? **Luke 6:27-28, Matthew 5:43-44**

**EGW:** Christ proceeds to teach that the principles of God's law reach even to the intents and purposes of the mind. And he plainly states that if we faithfully keep the ten precepts, we shall love our neighbor as ourselves. "Ye have heard," he says, "that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love

you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." {RH, May 19, 1910 par. 5}

A consistent religious life, holy conversation, a godly example, true-hearted benevolence, mark the representative of Christ. He will labor to pluck sinners as brands from the burning; he will perform every duty faithfully. Thus he will become a beacon light. {RH, May 19, 1910 par. 6}

Reader, we are nearing the Judgment. Talents have been lent us on trust. Let none of us be at last condemned as slothful servants. Send forth the words of life to those in darkness. Let the church be true to her trust. Her earnest, humble prayers will make the presentation of truth effectual, and Christ will be glorified. {RH, May 19, 1910 par. 7}

21. What are true Christians considered in the eyes of God for suffering through this hatefulness? **Luke 6:22**

**EGW:** (see comment for question 12)

22. What will be required of a true Christian to be saved in the end? **Mark 13:13, Matthew 10:22**

**EGW:** So bitter would be the enmity to the gospel that even the tenderest earthly ties would be disregarded. The disciples of Christ would be betrayed to death by the members of their own households. "Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake," He added; "but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Mark 13:13. But He bade them not to expose themselves unnecessarily to persecution. He Himself often left one field of labor for another, in order to escape from those who were seeking His life. When He was rejected at Nazareth, and His own townsmen tried to kill Him, He went down to Capernaum, and there the people were astonished at His teaching; "for His word was with power." Luke 4:32. So His servants were not to be discouraged by persecution, but to seek a place where they could still labor for the salvation of souls. {DA 355.3}