



## THINK IT THROUGH

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Many of us struggle with evangelism. How is verse 26 liberating and reassuring?

Why has there been such a long delay before Jesus returns?

Why have we been left here rather than being transported immediately to heaven to join our Father and Saviour?

If we put these two expectations together – **witness...** in a world which **hates God, Jesus and us** – what will our natural inclinations be?

*Jesus addresses this in John 16:1-4... Read these verses again.*



## INVESTIGATE

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What is Jesus' great concern (v1)?

What is one area where this might happen (v27)?

Verse 2 is spoken into a Jewish context. How might it apply to us today?

Again, note **WHY** this opposition comes (16:3).

Why does Jesus warn his disciples? What comfort is implied by Jesus warning them **BEFORE** the events actually happen?



## PRAY IT THROUGH

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Spend time praying for any in the group facing current opposition.

Pray for those believers for whom opposition can mean imprisonment and death.

Pray for your own witness and ask the Holy Spirit to speak through you and give you courage.

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A TRUE DISCIPLE?

SMALL GROUPS SHEET  
WEEK BEGINNING 27 JANUARY 2013

**Study 3: True disciples expect opposition**  
**(John 15:18 – 16:4)**

Oakhall  
CHURCH WELCOMES YOU



## FOR STARTERS

When you consider sharing your faith in Jesus what reactions do you expect?

**Read John 15:18 – 16:4**



## BACKGROUND

These are some of the last words of Jesus to his disciples. He is preparing them (and us) for the time when he has ascended back to heaven. How should real disciples live as they wait for his return? In John 15:1-17 we saw that fruitfulness is the mark of a true Christian as we enjoy a relationship with Jesus, know his love and experience his joy.

However this beautiful picture is not the whole story. Jesus now warns his disciples that it is going to be tough. He is concerned that His followers don't give up and that their expectations are right.

*In this section Jesus gives us two expectations and one application.*



## INVESTIGATE - Expect Opposition

Whereas v1-17 focussed on the relationship of believers with Jesus, this section focusses on the relationship of believers with the world.

How would you summarise Jesus' warning in v18?

Just in case we think the word "if" means this is avoidable, how does verse 19 help us get our expectations right?

What is the reason for the world's hatred of Christians (V19)?

*(Note: "world" here means humanity in rebellion against God.)*

How does "I have chosen you..." add to the hatred? See also verse 18 and 20.

Do you ever share some of these assumptions:

- People basically approve of Jesus.
- The basic problem is ignorance. If the world knew about Jesus it would believe.
- If Christians could be become more like Jesus then most people would follow Him.

How does Jesus teaching here help us think straight?



## INVESTIGATE

Remind yourself what happened to Jesus within hours of speaking these words. Read John 19:14-15. How does this provide a shocking snapshot of human nature?

Why do human beings hate Jesus (v21, 23)?

**Note John's logic:**

*- The world hates followers of Jesus because it hates Jesus because it hates the Father!*

How do you react these conclusions? How does John 3:19 help?

Why is the world without excuse in their rejection of God (v22, 24)?



## THINK IT THROUGH

Why is it so important that we grasp this truth about our own sinful nature?

Why is it vital that we grasp this assessment of others?

It is estimated that every 3 minutes or so a Christian is murdered for his or her beliefs. We experience nothing like this in the West, but in what ways have you experienced an element of opposition from friends, family or colleagues?

It's been said that, "If you have never found it hard to live as a Christian in this world, you have to ask yourself the question, 'Am I living the Christian life?'" (Discuss)



## INVESTIGATE

### - Expect the witness of the Spirit (v26-27)

Given this hatred toward God, we might expect God to abandon the world. We know He hasn't – He demonstrated amazing love by giving His Son. How else has God revealed his love (v26; Jn 16:8-11)?

How does the Spirit testify about Jesus (v27)? See also Romans 10:13-15.

*Note: There has been more Christian martyrs in the past century than the previous 19 centuries combined, BUT there has also been more people becoming disciples of Jesus in the last 100 years than the previous 1900 years put together!*