



# Believe

JOHN

[MESSAGE](#)[STUDY GUIDE](#)[GROUP MATERIAL](#)[SONGS](#)

## Community Group Material:

Ask one person to pray at the beginning of your meeting.

### Check-in

Check in with each other about how everyone is doing.

**Bible Reading:** John 15:18-16:4

### Sermon Summary:

In John 14-16, Jesus prepares his disciples for life after he's returned to the Father. He's assured them that they will not be alone & that "another" comforter, the Holy Spirit, will be with them. In addition, they will continue to enjoy the community of love with one another. At the end of John 15, Jesus also warns them that they will be hated by the world & persecuted because of their faith. They had seen Jesus being persecuted for all kinds of things as they walked with him. Jesus lets his disciples know that just because he won't be around, that doesn't mean that the hatred will subside. He tells them that the focus will turn to them because they are connected to him! What was crucial for them to understand, is still crucial that we also understand. *"What do we do when we face hatred & persecution because of our beliefs?"* Do we retaliate or take revenge? Do we shrink back & be silent? Or do we courageously move forward & testify of Jesus?

### Discussion:

1. Jesus uses the vine/branches metaphor to portray his relationship to his disciples. It's vital that each one of us is connected to him. But we also are in a community of love with one another, where we lay down our lives for each other. How have you experienced this love from the faith community (ies) you've been part of?
2. What kinds of hatred or persecution have you experienced as a Christian?
3. Jesus made it clear in verses 18-20 that the reason the disciples will be hated is because they first hated him. Why should we not be surprised that we suffer as followers of Jesus? (see Kent Hughes & Matt Carter's quotes)
4. Jesus lets us know why the world hated him in verses 22-24. What was the reason? Talk about what sin looks like in John's Gospel (Jn. 16:9)
5. How should we appropriately respond to persecution & hatred as followers of Jesus? What would be examples of inappropriate responses?
6. What role will God's Spirit play as we face hatred & persecution for our faith? What does he enable us to do?
7. Talk about Mark 13:11, & how Jesus promises us divine reinforcements as we are persecuted. Is this encouraging to you?

**End with Prayer.**

- Pray for us all to see the distinct possibility that persecution is coming our way at work, school, or from family & friends.
- Pray for one another.