



**This week meditations on liturgical texts  
from **Skynia Magazine****

**July 18 - 24**  
**The Gregorian calendar**

**Content**

<b>Stages of meditation</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>July 18</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>July 19</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>July 20</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>July 21</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>July 22</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>July 23</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>July 24</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>What is Skynia Magazine?</b>	<b>30</b>

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## Stages of meditation

Please find below some schematic prompts for each stage of the meditation on the Word of God. [Read more.](#)

### 1. Reading

- Read the text
- What does it tell by itself?
- Clear up the context
- Look up the comments
- Find the key-phrase

### 2. Meditation

- What is my here and now?
- What does the Word tell me?
- Use your imagination
- "Digest" the text
- The Word and my life

### 3. Prayer

- What will I say in response?
- Recognition and request
- Gratitude and glorifying
- Prayer in the Word
- My participation in the Divine Liturgy

### 4. Contemplation

- A call to conversion
- Now I am silent
- Staying in the presence of God
- Now He is guiding me

## Biblical readings and meditations

July 18

Sunday 8

1 Corinthians 1: 10-18

Matthew 14: 14-22

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

### 1 Corinthians 1: 10-18

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power. For the message about the cross is foolishness to those

who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

### **Matthew 14: 14-22**

When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

### **Meditation**

Today the Word of God reminds us of the event when Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed the people who followed Him to a deserted and solitary place.

Why did *five thousand men, besides women and children*, stay so late in a deserted place where it was impossible to find or buy any

food? Probably, because their need for the spiritual food that Christ gave them was greater than the temporary physical hunger.

*They need not go away; you give them something to eat,* - Jesus addresses the disciples, who ask Him to send the crowds away, because they are hungry. Christ knows all the needs of these people; in addition to the spiritual nourishment and healing their ailments, He gives them bodily nourishment.

*All ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.* Jesus does not give food only to the weakest and to those who have lost their strength; the Lord wants to feed all who have come to Him. Jesus does not quench the hunger of the crowds only in part; everyone ate *and were filled*, and there was still enough bread left. Apparently, only those who did not want to accept the bread that Christ gave could remain hungry. The Lord is generous, His blessings for us never end, His gifts will suffice for all. He can satisfy any hunger; He can give us much more than we hope for, but we are not always able to accept it.

To feed the people, Jesus uses His disciples: *Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.* Through the hands of His disciples, Christ nourishes the crowds.

In this meal one can recognise the prototype of the Eucharist. At the Last Supper with the apostles, *Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

(Luke 22:19). Today Christ does not want us to be hungry and leave Him. Every day through the hands of the priests, Christ gives us His food. His Body and Blood are for everyone.

**July 19**

**Monday**

**1 Corinthians 11:31 - 12:6**

**Matthew 18: 1-11**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

**1 Corinthians 11:31 - 12:6**

Brethren, but if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If you are hungry, eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for your condemnation. About the other things I will give instructions when I come.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of

activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

### **Matthew 18: 1-11**

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

“If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

“If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire.

“Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.

## Meditation

Today the Word of God calls us to be resolute in temptations. When my hand, foot, or eye tempts me, causing me or others to fall, it is better for me to lose them, but not to sin. Jesus assures us that it is better *to enter life*, that is, the kingdom of God (cf. Mark 9:47), maimed, than *to be thrown into the hell of fire* with both hands, feet, and eyes.

Apparently, Jesus did not mean only certain parts of our body. Can our hand steal itself, can our feet lead us to something evil, can our eyes admire something sinful by themselves? Bad intentions and desires arise deep in our hearts and minds. The eye, the foot, or the hand alone do not decide anything, they submit to our mind and will, and, in response to our consent to sin, complete the fall.

What can be that part of ourselves that we need to get rid of? The opportunity to compromise with sin for one's own benefit; an offer to work dishonestly, but to live in abundance; consent to live in sin in order to keep up with the times; fear of acknowledging one's own Christianity so as not to differ from others and not to be ridiculed; desire to have power, but to follow illegal instructions of others...

Healthy people can only imagine how much pain people suffer from the loss or injury of a certain part of their body, how difficult it is to live in a society without eyes, arms or legs. Christ also understood this; we know many examples when Jesus restored the sight, healed the paralyzed and those with withered hands. Apparently, the same suffering a person can experience in the fight against temptation, in trying to tear off something that can cause a fall. Jesus understands

this, and today He assures us that it is better to experience the pain of such a loss than some pleasant moments that we think sin can bring, but in fact it thrown us into hell.

Today we hear the words: *Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks!* But we also hear other words: *Occasions for stumbling are bound to come...* Temptations can cause me to fall or grow; they can destroy me, but they can also lead me to the kingdom of God. Let us ask the Lord for the grace of endurance in temptations and courage in fighting with them.

**July 20**

**Tuesday**

**The Holy and Glorious  
Prophet Elijah (Elias)**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

**James 5: 10-20**

**Luke 4: 22-30**

**James 5: 10-20**

Brethren, as an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “Yes” be yes and your “No” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess

your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

#### **Luke 4: 22-30**

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill

on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

### **Meditation**

It is interesting to see how quickly people move from the admiration for Jesus to His rejection. According to Luke, this happened to Jesus at the beginning of His work of liberation on this earth, in the midst of His own people. The whole life of Jesus is filled with strong rejection. And it's not about simple discussions around different points of view. The rejection culminates in Jerusalem, where Jesus is crucified and killed by his opponents. Why is Jesus rejected? The first reason is the Incarnation – Jesus is one of them (*Is not this Joseph's son?*). The people expected a stellar Messiah capable of performing miracles and tricks. It seemed implausible to them that God would work through an unremarkable man whose origins everyone knew. Here the saying *Doctor, cure yourself!* means: He is poor, without any social program, unable to free even his family from oppression and poverty.

The second reason is the search for miracles: *Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.* Jesus refuses to make signs for His own benefit, He refuses to be an idol of abundance, prestige, power and wealth (look at the temptations of Jesus: Luke 4:1-12). These two reasons prevent the great liberation of *Today* to come to the people of Nazareth. In addition, the situation of Jesus is similar to the situations of the Old Testament prophets rejected by their own countrymen.

We must ask ourselves whether today we, the Christian community, are capable of a prophecy, whether we allow God to reveal Himself through our actions. The world has not yet reached its end, much remains to be done. Should we wait for other Elijahs or Jesuses to shake the dust off their sandals and go and preach the Kingdom to other nations and cultures that are not from this flock?

Prophecy, charisma, consistency, and testimony will never find peace as long as wealth, power, prestige, and riches of individuals or nations rule the world. A society without prophets has lost its direction and is becoming shallow. A society that persecutes and kills its prophets will always be a slave to the illusion of its own self-sufficiency.

**July 21**

**Wednesday**

**1 Corinthians 13:4 - 14:5**

**Matthew 20: 1-16**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

### **1 Corinthians 13:4 - 14:5**

Brethren, love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Pursue love and strive for the spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy. For those who speak in a tongue do not speak to

other people but to God; for nobody understands them, since they are speaking mysteries in the Spirit. On the other hand, those who prophesy speak to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. Those who speak in a tongue build up themselves, but those who prophesy build up the church. Now I would like all of you to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. One who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

### **Matthew 20: 1-16**

And the Lord said: "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they

grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

### **Meditation**

Jesus has just finished talking to a rich young man. He approves of his efforts to keep the commandments, but then watches as he goes away grieving, because he cannot take the next step: leave his wealth and follow Jesus. By this example, Jesus assures the disciples that he who has the courage to leave everything will receive a hundred times more on earth and in eternal life.

What riches are we talking about? Wealth can be material and spiritual, thus outlining those *things* to which our hearts are attached and which do not allow us to be ready to follow Jesus.

Today's Gospel speaks of one of the spiritual riches that prevents us from accepting God's gift. It is about the wealth of those who consider themselves to be *the first*. These are the laborers who work in the vineyard from the early hour. These are the ones who complain about the landowner, because they are hindered by his generosity, which contrasts with their worldview, according to which everything you take should be properly evaluated.

This way of thinking is a great obstacle to spiritual growth, because according to it we take God's gifts for granted – as a compensation for our efforts, payment for our work. Thus, we lose our filial relationship with God and feel like *the eldest son* from the Gospel parable by Luke, who felt like a slave serving his father. If we perceive life from the standpoint of a slave, we will not be able to see the benefits of working from the early hour, that is, how from the very beginning the Father sees all our struggles and difficulties of life.

Yet, as in today's Gospel, the Lord keeps His promise to the laborers who worked from the early morning. But if we feel envy for those who have lived a sinful life and are worthy of the same honors, we ourselves will cease to be worthy of God's gift and will not see Him distribute His love to everyone. In this sense, the last will be first, because the last are those who do not claim on everything, they are *poor in spirit*, able to accept the gift of God's kingdom: love as a free gift from God.

**July 22**

**Thursday**

**1 Corinthians 14: 6-9**

**Matthew 20: 17-28**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

### **1 Corinthians 14: 6-9**

Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I speak to you in some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? It is the same way with lifeless instruments that produce sound, such as the flute or the harp. If they do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is being played? And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? So with yourselves; if in a tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is being said? For you will be speaking into the air.

### **Matthew 20: 17-28**

While Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised."

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favor of him. And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." He said to them, "You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father."

When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

### **Meditation**

The apostles, as today's Gospel excerpt states, seem to be going their way, heading for the city other than Jesus is. Jacob and John, via their mother, ask God to be the first in his Kingdom – one at His right hand, and one at His left hand. They are following the Messiah of human and earthly glory, and it is human and earthly glory that they expect for them from Him. They want to be of importance on the earth.

A real danger on our way is to be going a double road: the road of Christ and the road of His followers. The road of Jesus is the road of redemption via own blood shedding, holistic sacrifice of one's own life. While the road of followers is a pursuit of glory, ephemeral, and sometimes even clearly sinful, since it is based on injustice, violence, privileges, sympathies, labeling, false testimony.

The real essence of religion is its permanent, consistent, uninterrupted purification. The Church always has something to purify, and purification starts with one's own conscience. We are called to stand in front of the cross of Jesus on a daily basis, since that is the tool of our salvation. Heart purification stands for clearing one's conscience, preferably – in front of the Crucified. Those who purify themselves help the Church be cleaner. One may never think about purification of others without self-purification. Self-purification suggests a perfect example for others for following Christ.

Let us ask God for the gift of permanent conversion, the gift of being humble, serving our brothers, since that is the secret of becoming more like in the image of Christ.

**July 23**

**Friday**

**1 Corinthians 14: 26-40**

**Matthew 21: 12-14, 17-20**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

**1 Corinthians 14: 26-40**

Brethren, what should be done then, my friends? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn; and let one interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let them be silent in church and speak to themselves and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to someone else sitting nearby, let the first person be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged. And the spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets, for God is a God not of disorder but of peace.

(As in all the churches of the saints, women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a

woman to speak in church. Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only ones it has reached?)

Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized. So, my friends, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; but all things should be done decently and in order.

### **Matthew 21: 12-14, 17-20**

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers." The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

In the morning, when he returned to the city, he was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the side of the road, he went to it and found nothing at all on it but leaves. Then he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. When the disciples saw it, they were amazed, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?"

## Meditation

Jesus loved the Temple in His life. He often came back there in His adult life. In the days of his Passion, not hiding His nostalgia, He answers His tormentors: *Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me* (Matthew 26:55). But once, as it is described in today's Gospel, it went over the top. On entering the Temple He started *driving out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves, He said to them, "It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer"; but you are making it a den of robbers"*.

*Inside and beyond churches, and even more – inside and beyond dismissal sanctuaries, this dangerous impression was nested as a spider that God, faith, grace ended up at the seller's counters. The Home of the Father! This beautiful radiance of unselfishness (...) was brought down to the exchange of things. The danger of the exchange of things, and not feelings of the heart, is not something make-believe. You made such gestures, said such words, gave such sacrifice, did the prescribed. And it's not important if everything was done in ungenerously – you paid your debt to God, bought God. Faith has been narrowed down to the market (Alessandro Casati).*

But Jesus did not arrive to bring people to the Temple, calling them to the inside, but to bring the Temple, that is God's presence, into everybody's heart. Certainly, one should pay tribute to the symbolic importance of the Jewish Temple and the beauty leading us into the divine, that many our churches are distinguished for. But this should not be brought down to an absolute. The relationship with God is

established at the highest meeting in prayer and acceptance of the rejected. The relationship with God has changed, it goes further than just a set of gestures or things that need to be sacrificed. The relationship is established through mutual recognition of the testament, hopes, the need for communion and peace, recognition, nostalgia for the unity of all peoples, brave heading for freedom. As poet Rainer Maria Rilke wrote: *an individual is a temple the dome of which you can never see*. Maybe, that is also the case with our God, the most beautiful and the largest temple of our heart?

**July 24**

**Saturday**

**The Holy Martyrs Borys and  
Hlib**

**Romans 8: 28-39**

**John 15:17 - 16:2**

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

### **Romans 8: 28-39**

Brethren, we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **John 15:17 - 16:2**

And the Lord said: “I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

“If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘Servants are not greater than their master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not have sin. But now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. It was to fulfill the word that is written in their law, ‘They hated me without a cause.’

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

“I have said these things to you to keep you from stumbling. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God.”

### **Meditation**

The topic of this Gospel is the world’s hatred (the people resisting Christ in general are meant in this context) and the disciples that are going to fall victim to this hatred. Here not a probability, but certain and undeniable reality is meant – the disciples of Christ engender hatred. The Greek word *miseo* used by John to denote hatred refers in this case not just to the feelings but to specific behaviour as well – destructive violence. The cross of Jesus is the hatred that has acquired a specific form. Jesus does not offer any consolation to His disciples to face the world’s hostility. Instead He offers *knowledge (recall the word)*. That knowledge will enable the disciples to see the theological dimension of persecution. What happened to the Teacher is the criterion for understanding of what will happen. In his conflict relationship with the world a disciple may read the events of his own life, interpret the hatred directed at him as an opportunity for uniting his fate with Christ’s fate. This would not have happened if the disciples shared the values of the world since the world would love you as its own, that is it would love everything what is similar to it. But the foundation for the disciples’ existence is

not the world, but Christ. It is Him who wrest them out of the world limitations with the word of His Revelation. The disciples are not separated from the world, they are hated not because they are different or better. The world revolts against them since they keep staying in it, though being wrest out of its power. The hatred of the world is guided at Christ, and hence, against those whom He has taken away from the world. That is why Jesus asks His disciples to remember that He is a sample for understanding their life situation and of what they will have to face. In spite of the difference in roles and positions, they are called to become actors in His fate. They have to always realize that not that much their actions or deeds will make them the target for the world as the deed of Revelation made by Christ. The disciples are staying with Him, while the world has rejected Him.

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