

Scripture source(s): John 15:18-27

Topic: Following Christ, opposition, toxic empathy, inclusion, truth, Holy Spirit

Sermon Title: The Cost of Being a “Real One”

Sermon Series: Remember This (The Gospel of John)

Date taught: October 26th, 2025

Audience: CBC

Scriptural appeal (PICK ONE): Fear of judgment and death, release from burdens and shame, an appreciation for the “attractiveness of the truth”, the satisfaction of unfulfilled existential longings, coming to God to fix a problem, out of a desire to be loved. (Keller, Center Church, pp. 114-115)

Felt Need: Imbalanced Lifestyle, Comparison, Ruminating/Self Talk, Inability to Process Pain, Loneliness, Neglecting Physical Needs

Question: Does this pass the “Who cares test?” Why is this going to matter on Monday morning?

Bottom Line:

REMEMBER THIS (wk 6)

Sermon Title: The Cost of Being a “Real One”

A real one is someone authentic, loyal and solid no matter what.

Crowd Participation /// Be a Real One!

If you’re a real Christian, be one... but there it is costly.

STORY /// The Big Contributions of Christians in the World in the last 300 years.

SONG Connection /// You are Good... God’s goodness for exceeds the church walls!

Christian Scientists and Foundational Discoveries

1. **Isaac Newton** (a devout Christian, though just outside the 300-year window) established the mathematical laws of nature that fueled the Enlightenment view of an orderly, divinely governed universe.
2. **Michael Faraday** (1791–1867): Pioneer of electromagnetism and electric motors; a humble Christian who taught that science reveals God’s order.
3. **James Clerk Maxwell** (1831–1879): Formulated the classical theory of electromagnetic radiation; saw his physics as revealing “the glory of the Creator.”

Printing Revolution & Literacy

1. The **printing press** (c. 1440, Johannes Gutenberg—a devout Catholic) was originally created **to print the Bible**.
 - + The **Gutenberg Bible (1455)** was the first major book printed using movable type.
 - + This invention democratized knowledge and literacy, fueling the Reformation and the spread of education worldwide.
2. Over the next 300 years, **Bible societies** like:
 - + **British and Foreign Bible Society** (1804)

- + **American Bible Society** (1816)
- + **Wycliffe Bible Translators** (1942)

spearheaded global literacy movements and printing technologies to bring Scripture to the masses.

3. The Bible remains **the most printed and distributed book in history**, directly driving the creation of **modern publishing, translation theory, and mass education**.

So, why is there so much opposition to Christians today? John's Gospel will give us a better understanding of the why, and we will explore the show of Christian living in the midst of opposition.

GOD: John 15:18-27 (READ IT ALL)

Jesus had just told them to abide in Him, bear fruit, and love one another... and now he reminds, and some people will hate you for it. (John 15:1-17)

1. First, he reminds the disciples (and us) how important their mission is and gives simple steps for doing it well (15:1-17).
2. Second, Jesus he warns about the cost of the mission.

I. Felt need /// Knock off the rust of complacency

- A.** Many Christians in our country have become complacent. Are you one of those? Do you think everything is going to be OK? Why be concerned? Why pray about it? Why get involved in it? That complacency is a dangerous thing. Your Enemy will not stop attacking, so we cannot stop watching. **Complacent living is a slow, paralyzing death.**
- B.** This isn't Central Perk (Friends), nor is it the Peach Pit (90210), and it's not Scoops Ahoy (Stranger Things). We are more Mordor than Mayberry. More spiritual Gettysburg than Greendale (Community)
- C.** Many butchers have lost fingers from complacency at work. Think about that. That's disgusting... but something that is just as disgusting is that...
- D.** Many marriages have failed because the husband and wife have become complacent in communication. Many marriages have failed from being complacent in their love life. Many parents have lost their kids to drugs and abusive relationships because they have been complacent. And to me, that is just as disgusting. That makes me angry. That gets me fired up.
- E.** In the words of a Mark McGrath, "Take a good look into lake YOU and see what you find inside."

II. Following Jesus means standing out, not fitting in. (vv. 18-21) **(GUIDE)**

A. STORY /// Be a little weird /// Okay be a little weird.

Tell your neighbor, “You’re a little weird and that’s good.... No offense.” ☺

B. In John’s Gospel, “the world” (*kosmos*) usually refers to **humanity organized in rebellion against God** — not every individual unbeliever, but the system and mindset opposed to Christ’s rule (see John 7:7, 1 John 2:15–17).

+ Here it’s talking about people who don’t follow God and may not care about Him — or even push back against Him and His followers.

C. So, when Jesus says, “the world will hate you,” He’s describing the reaction of that **spiritual system**, not commanding us to withdraw or retaliate.

D. Reason #1 **The world opposed Jesus first.** (opposition) (v. 18)

Jesus incited the most central and controlling of sins: rejection of God’s gracious revelation, rebellion against God, decisive preference for darkness rather than light (cf. notes on 3:19–21; 9:39–41).¹

GOSPEL HERE

Jesus disciples are not exempt from what Jesus endured.

STORY /// Play the Man

The Martyrdom of Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley

The Historical Context

After King Henry VIII broke from the Roman Catholic Church in the 1530s, **England entered a time of intense religious upheaval.**

- + Under **Henry VIII**, the Church of England was formed, but much of Catholic doctrine and practice remained.
- + Under **Edward VI** (Henry’s son), Protestant reforms flourished — including the promotion of preaching, Bible reading in English, and salvation by faith alone.
- + When **Queen Mary I** (a devout Catholic) took the throne in 1553, she **reversed those reforms** and aimed to restore England to Roman Catholicism.

Her reign became known for the **Marian Persecutions**, in which nearly **300 Protestants were executed**, mostly by burning.

Why Latimer and Ridley Were Targeted

Both men were **leading voices of the English Reformation**:

¹ D. A. Carson, [*The Gospel according to John*](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 526.

- + **Nicholas Ridley** was the **Bishop of London** and a respected scholar who helped write the *Book of Common Prayer*.
- + **Hugh Latimer** was the **Bishop of Worcester**, known as a passionate preacher who spoke boldly about personal faith, repentance, and Scripture's authority over church tradition.

They stood firmly against Catholic teachings that had reemerged under Mary, especially:

- + **Transubstantiation** – the belief that the bread and wine literally become Christ's body and blood.
- + **The authority of the Pope** over the Church.
- + **Salvation through works and sacraments** rather than by faith in Christ alone.

Their message was clear: **the Bible, not the church hierarchy, is the ultimate authority** — and **salvation is through Jesus alone**.

The Trial and Execution

Both men were arrested, tried for heresy, and pressured to recant their beliefs.

They refused.

- + Latimer boldly said that he would rather die than deny the truth of God's Word.
- + Ridley held that Christ's presence in Communion was *spiritual, not physical*.

On **October 16, 1555**, they were led to the stake in Oxford.

As the flames were lit, Latimer cried out to Ridley:

"Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man;
we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England,
as I trust shall never be put out."

That "candle" symbolized the enduring witness of faith and courage that would inspire future generations of believers and reformers.

The Lasting Impact

Their martyrdom became a **turning point** in the Reformation in England.

- + Their story was later immortalized in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*.
- + Their courage inspired countless Protestants to hold firm under persecution.
- + The "candle" they lit was seen in later revivals, reform movements, and the strengthening of Protestant faith across England

Application /// Latimer and Ridley remind us that truth sometimes costs comfort, **but their fire became light for others**.

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” **Tertullian**

E. Reason #2 **The world rejects Christ in us.** (rejection) (vv. 19-20)

1. The world is a society of rebels and therefore finds it hard to tolerate those who are in joyful allegiance to the king to whom all loyalty is due.²
2. **Christians are light to the unbeliever; therefore, revealing who they are by observing who we are. (GUIDE)**
3. **The light of Christ in us reveals the darkness in them.**
4. **The world is convicted by righteousness (John 16:8)**
5. **“When He [the Holy Spirit] comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.” John 16:8, ESV**

The Holy Spirit uses the witness of godly people to bring conviction. Sometimes that conviction feels like discomfort, guilt, or resistance in the hearts of those still living apart from God.

6. **Illustration /// When you see a white shirt, but it has been worn many times and been through the wash.** It is white or so we think. But, if I take another short, bland new, never washed, never worn, the other shirt is clearly not as white as we once thought.
7. **As an unholy and lost person observe a holy and righteous person their sins and iniquities are exposed.**
8. When believers walk in righteousness, their very presence and conduct expose sin—not by condemnation, but by contrast. The light of Christ in them reveals the true nature of darkness. Holiness is like turning on a light in a dark room; what was hidden becomes visible.
9. **Christ in you... radiating and exposing.**

10.A Teaching of Jesus

“There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God’s one and only Son. ¹⁹ And the judgment is based on this fact: God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. ²⁰ All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. ²¹ But those who do what is right

² D. A. Carson, [*The Gospel according to John*](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 525.

come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.” **John 3:18-21, NLT³**

11.A teaching from Paul

“Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. ² Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God. ³ Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God’s people. ⁴ Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. ⁵ You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. ⁶ Don’t be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. ⁷ Don’t participate in the things these people do. ⁸ For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! ⁹ For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, **expose them**. ¹² It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. ¹³ But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, ¹⁴ for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, “Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light.” **Ephesians 5:1-14, NLT**

Living by the Spirit’s Power (Subheading in the NLT)

12. ¹⁵ So be careful how you live. Don’t live like fools, but like those who are wise. ¹⁶ Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. ¹⁷ Don’t act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. **Ephesians 5:15-17, NLT⁴**

F. Reason #3 **The world’s hatred stems from their ignorance of God.** (v. 21)

1. Jesus, **“They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.” John 15:21, NIV84⁵**
2. The world system functions based **on conformity**.⁶

³ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), Jn 3:18–21.

⁴ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), Eph 5:1–17.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Jn 15:21.

⁶ Warren W. Wiersbe, [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 360.

- + Be like the world.
- + Take in all media without discernment
- + Marry and divorce like the world
- + Gender is fluid and based on how you feel
- + Put feelings before facts
- + Buy and sell for material gain
- + Chase celebrities and influencers.
- + Spend like they spend.
- + Dabble in sorcery and the demonic.
- + These are all ways to get you to conform to the world.
- + Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. **Romans 12:2, NIV84**⁷

3. We are in the world but not of the world.

4. When we trusted Christ, we moved into a new spiritual position: we are now “in Christ” and “out of the world.” To be sure, we are *in* the world physically, but not *of* the world spiritually!⁸

III. See Through the World's Cover Up (vv. 22–25) (GUIDE)

A. Jesus' revelation exposed sin (vv.22–23)

- B. “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin.” John 15:22, NIV84**⁹

- + Christ's words and works removed the cloak of ignorance.

C. Their rejection reveals a willful resistance to God.

D. In what ways are Christians being deceived by the world's cover up?

E. Application /// Satan is manipulating people by weaponizing words like empathy, tolerance and inclusion. (GUIDE)

F. The world wants to prioritize compassion and minimize conviction. (GUIDE)

1. Thus, even some so-called Christians are bending on key biblical convictions because they have succumbed to the beating of the compassionate drums.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Ro 12:2.

⁸ Warren W. Wiersbe, [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 360.

⁹ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Jn 15:22.

2. “Gender affirming care” aka child mutilation and mind warping.

G. “Cover and Move” EXPLAIN

“Cover fire” so the Enemy can move and reposition.

H. **Empathy** as a ploy to derail us from our moral standings.

1. They present a believable or relatable victim.
2. They tell a heart-rending story.
3. They move people emotionally to their cause.
4. They give you one way to serve the cause (no grey).
5. They convince people to become an ally of their cause.
6. They form a community of “wounded victims.”

Racial issues, marriage issues, abortion, telling us that one type of person matters more than another because of the pigment of their skin, etc.)

- + **Al Mohler** distinguishes empathy (feeling *with* another) from sympathy (feeling *for* another) and suggests sympathy (and “responsible compassion grounded in truth”) are more essential for Christian moral behavior.¹⁰
- + Furthermore, **Empathy without a biblical grounding is harmful not helpful.**
- + Without the moral framework, empathy is just an emotional plea to get you to do whatever they want you to do. (If it’s outrage, give, put a little black square on your social media post, or put on a mask.
- + **Empathy, without morality, manipulates people with words like tolerance and inclusion.**
- + What the world means when it says **tolerance**.
 1. “They love each other”
 2. “They’re just following their hearts”
 3. “They’re just doing what the other kids are doing”
 4. “If they love each other, shouldn’t they get married”
 5. “Well, if they feel like they are in the wrong body, shouldn’t they be able to change..”
- + **God’s love allows us to be tolerant of other people.**
- + **Worldly tolerance:** There are no rules, so don’t judge others’ choices or opinions. It’s **not necessary to hold people accountable.** Fickle, divisive, unbiblical, angry, immoral,

¹⁰ <https://chatgpt.com/c/68efb274-6464-8325-93a9-202df16eabec>

- + **Biblical tolerance:** I will share God's truth with others in gentleness and respect. Because of the love of Christ, I will love them if they agree or disagree. (SAME SLIDE) (**GUIDE, BOTH**)
- + **Tolerance is a specifically Christian idea.** At its basis is the belief that "the truth will come out." It was never intended to prevent public exercise of religious beliefs, nor advocacy for Christian morality in the public realm.
- + **Biblical intolerance:** Sin
- + **In Scripture, tolerance is linked with love — agape love, the selfless kind.**
- + Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **Colossians 3:13**, NIV84¹¹
- + ... walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,
- + with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. **Ephesians 4:1-3, NASB**¹²
- + **Biblical tolerance is based on the belief that everyone deserves our compassion.** (Romans 3:23; 2 Cor. 1:3-4)
- + **Biblical tolerance does have boundaries: We are not to excuse sin or evil or embrace ungodly behaviors. When properly applied, tolerance brings the peace of God.**
- + What the world wants you to do by using **inclusion**.
- + It's an attempt to use a moral grenade to justify the stark differences between good and evil, light and darkness, people of the Kingdom and people of the world.
- + **STORY/Illustration ///** MORE HERE
- + The United States is on the fast-track to a moral free fall, and Christians must not go with them.
- + **Application ///** This does not mean that we are isolated from reality or insulated from the world's needs, so "heavenly minded that we are no earthly good." Rather, it means that we look at the things of earth from heaven's point of view.¹³

¹¹ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#). (1984). (Col 3:13–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

¹² [New American Standard Bible: 1995 update](#). (1995). (Eph 4:1–3). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

¹³ Warren W. Wiersbe, [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 360.

+ **STORY /// Hospitals and Modern Medical Care**

1. **Christian monastic orders** laid the groundwork for hospitals in Europe (earlier than 300 years ago), but their modern expansion in the **1700s–1900s** spread globally.
2. By the **19th century**, nearly **all hospitals** in Europe and North America were founded or run by Christian churches or denominations.
3. **Mission hospitals** (1800s–1900s) brought modern medicine to Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
4. **Examples:**
 - + **Lottie Moon Hospital** (China, Baptist)
 - + **C.M.S. Hospital, Lahore** (Anglican, 1850s)
 - + **Tenwek Hospital, Kenya** (Presbyterian)
 - + **Vellore Christian Medical College, India** (founded by Dr. Ida Scudder, 1900).
 - + Christian nurses like **Florence Nightingale**, motivated by her faith, professionalized nursing and founded the first modern nursing school (1860).

+ **Application /// Silence in the presence of evil is compliance with evil.**

Silence can equal complicity

- + **Proverbs 31:8–9** – “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves... defend the rights of the poor and needy.”
 - God expects His people to *speak up* for justice and righteousness.
- + **Ezekiel 3:17–18** – God tells the prophet that if he doesn’t warn the wicked, their blood will be on his hands.
 - Failing to speak truth can make us partly responsible for another’s downfall.
- + **James 4:17** – “If anyone knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.”
 - Silence in the face of known evil or injustice can be sinful omission.
- + **Esther 4:14** – Mordecai warns Esther that if she stays silent, deliverance will come another way, but she and her family will perish.
 - God often calls people to courageously speak up.

Scholarly agreement:

Most Christian ethicists and biblical commentators agree that **silence in the face of clear evil or injustice is wrong**. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (during Nazi Germany) famously said,

“Silence in the face of evil is itself evil.”

A. Their hatred fulfills Scripture (vv. 24–25)

- + “They hated Me without reason.” (Psalm 35:19; 69:4)
- + The world’s hostility is not random but foreknown by God.

B. Application /// The rejection of Christ is not evidence of His failure but of the world’s rebellion.

IV. Count on the Spirit’s Back up (v. 26) (GUIDE)

A. The Helper’s Testimony. (v. 26)

When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. **John 15:26, NIV84**¹⁴

B. Two names (roles) being given in this passage.

1. Counselor

- a. Counselor reminds us of the **helping, encouraging and strengthening work of the Spirit.**
- b. When the **Counselor** comes ‘he’ (*ekeinos*: masculine pronoun implying the personhood of the Counsellor/Holy Spirit) will testify to the truth about Jesus. Such testimony is largely a defense of Jesus in a hostile world, a world that hated Jesus because he told it the truth it did not want to hear. In this action the Counsellor functions in the standard way a *paraklētos* operated in the ancient world, providing testimony in favor of an accused friend.¹⁵

c. Heart- Counselors

2. Spirit of Truth

- a. Spirit of Truth points to the **teaching, illuminating, and reminding work of the Spirit.**
Head- Spirit of Truth

C. The Holy Spirit ministers to both the head and the heart.

D. The believer’s testimony. (v. 27)

- a. And you also **must** testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. **John 15:27, NIV84**¹⁶

¹⁴ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Jn 15:26.

¹⁵ Colin G. Kruse, [John: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 4, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 322.

¹⁶ [The Holy Bible: New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), Jn 15:27.

- b. The Counsellor's testimony would be given alongside the testimony of the disciples: *And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning*. Because of the juxtaposition of the statement about the Counsellor's testimony (26) and the disciples' testimony to Jesus (27), it is probable that the Counsellor's testimony is to be understood as effected through the witness of the disciples. While the NIV translates the first clause of this sentence as an imperative, 'and you also must testify', it is, in fact, a simple indicative statement, 'and you also bear witness' (cf. RSV: 'and you also are witnesses'). The basis of the disciples' witness is their own experience of Jesus 'from the beginning', i.e. from the time he first called them to follow him.¹⁷

YOU:

Key #1: The world's rejection doesn't mean failure. Sometimes it confirms faithfulness.

Key #2: The world's deception has an ulterior motive. Even when cloaked in "kindness."

Key #3: The Spirit strengthens your witness. Because the Holy Spirit's got your back.

Be a real one for Jesus.

- + Following Jesus means Standing Out, Not Fitting In (vv.18–21)
- + See Through the World's Cover Up (vv. 22–25)
- + Count on the Spirit's Back up (vv. 26-27)

¹⁷ Colin G. Kruse, [*John: An Introduction and Commentary*](#), vol. 4, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 322.