

The sermon talks about "the status quo" or "the way things are" - the patterns we've normalized and defended in our lives. What's one area where you've found yourself settling for "this is fine" even when deep down you know it's not? What keeps you from changing it?

Jesus prays that his followers would be "in the world but not of the world." What do you think is the difference between being isolated from the world versus being engaged with it while living differently? Can you think of examples of each?

The sermon says "the way things are hates the way of Jesus" and that following Jesus will cause conflict. If you're honest, does that make following Jesus feel scary or uninviting? What would help you trust that Jesus is worth the cost of being different?

Jesus prays that we'd be "protected from the evil one" but not taken out of the world (v. 15). If you're feeling anxious about your faith around certain people (school, work, family), what would it look like to ask Jesus for protection instead of just trying to avoid those situations entirely?

Verse 18 says "As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world." If we're sent the same way Jesus was sent, what does that tell us about our mission? How does Jesus's own approach to "the way things are" (engaging tax collectors, sinners, the broken) challenge how you engage your neighbors and coworkers?

Digging Deeper

Peter warns that there's a difference between suffering because we're living like Jesus versus suffering because we're being jerks (1 Peter 2:20, 4:15-16). How do you discern the difference in your own life? When have you confused the two?

Jesus prays for our sanctification - that his word would transform us (v. 17). The sermon emphasizes that the church's distinctiveness should come from being like Jesus (his joy, peace, love) rather than just being against the culture. Where do you see the church (or yourself) being known more for what we oppose than for reflecting Jesus's character?