



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – October 25, 2026

To Know Christ...

They tried for over three years. The misguided and self-centered Jewish leaders wanted Jesus and His thinking out of their world. The political leaders of the Herodians [Mark 3:6] wanted Jesus removed from influencing the masses. The Romans wanted to keep the crowds in Judea & Galilee happily under the empire's ruling hand that cast a shadow across multiple continents. Jesus, as the leader and champion of the weak, overlooked, outcast, and those without privilege, still had a target on His back, which He had endured nearly all His life. The religious leaders temporarily allied with the political leaders to finally achieve their shared goal of eliminating Jesus, once and for all ... they assumed.

It had happened nearly all of Jesus' earthly life. Being under the age of two, Herod was the first to target the future King of Israel's death. [Matt. 2:16] When Jesus confronted the Jews in the synagogue of His hometown about how God had delivered Gentiles through faith in God, in rage they wanted to throw Him down from the town's cliff to kill Him. [Luke 4:28-29] Jesus taught the truth in relation to healing on the Sabbath, and the Pharisees conspired together, seeking how to destroy Him. [Matt. 12:14] When Jesus taught that the Word and Authority of God was supreme above the Pharisees' traditions, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, as He was also calling God His father. [John 5:18] When Jesus referred to Himself as the "I Am", as God did in the Old Testament, they picked up stones to throw at Him (seeking His death). [John 8:59] When Jesus referred to Himself as being God, the Jews tried to seize Him again, already having stones in their hands to take His life. [John 10:39, 31] After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council with Caiaphas (the high priest) and planned together to kill Jesus. [John 11:47-53] After Jesus cleansed the temple a second time, the chief priests and the scribes began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching. [Mark 11:18] The final straw ... when Jesus told parables showing the chief priests and the Pharisees that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to those faithful to the King, they sought to seize Him, but they feared the people, because He was considered to be a prophet. [Matt. 21:45-46]

They all hated Jesus without a justifiable cause. Jesus knew it; He even told His own apostles after they had partaken of their concluding Passover meal together. **"But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'"** [John 15:25] This

quotation from 'their Law' is Psalm 69:4, **“Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; Those who would destroy me are powerful, being wrongfully my enemies; What I did not steal, I then have to restore.”** Psalm 69:21 even has a specific prophecy that Jesus fulfills on the cross. And why did Jesus go through years and years of being wrongfully and unjustly targeted? The innocent, sinless Lamb of God, sent to die for ungodly sinners and His enemies! The Love of God on full, marvelous display. (Does this song resonate in your heart? ... make me a servant, **Lord, make me like YOU**, for YOU are a servant, make me one too ...) This is the Love we have been called to live for God in the shadow of His Cross, the offering for our salvation.

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