

November 5th, 2017

DIFFERENT

NDOP For the Persecuted Church

Terry Baldwin



[TITLE SLIDE:]

Today is NDOP for persecuted believers..... It's all about the Persecuted Church

Facts about Christian Persecution

- More Christians were martyred in the 20th century than in all other centuries combined [christianity.com]
- Many experts suggest that in over 60 nations, more than 100 million people have been persecuted (imprisoned, discriminated, beaten or killed)
- How many Christians are martyred each year? Impossible to say. Sadly, most martyrs suffer and die anonymously, unknown, forgotten, their deaths unrecorded except in heaven.
- It is claimed that 105,000 Christians are martyred for their faith each year [Deseret News, 2011]
- North Korea / Nigeria / India / Just about EVERY Middle Eastern nation
- Syria: By 2012, most of the 80,000 Christians in Homs had been 'cleansed' from their homes
- Indonesia: Between 2000-2002 10,000 Christians slaughtered

Video by Prager University.... - Dody Mahulette

"I am a christian who lives in a muslim-majority country, Indonesia. And I'd like to say something to every christian on earth; Yes. This video is telling the thruth. Only christian who lives in a muslim-majority country could understand every single sentence in this video. But, hey! We're Christian! We are the soldier of Christ. Being a Christian means you have to leave your comfort zone. Being a Christian is not supposed to be easy, always comfort, live peacefully, and so on. NO! I told you!"

- Christians are the largest group in the world today who are denied basic human rights simply because of who they are.

STILL..... THE CHURCH IS GROWING EVEN FASTER THAN ISLAM

Because it is the GOOD NEWS!!!



VIDEO [China Underground Church]

Remember last week- Jesus said.....



[1 John 3.13 NIV]

Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you.



[2 Timothy 3.12 NLT]

Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.



[John 15.18, 20 NIV]

If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you....

If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.

.....**All Because of JESUS!!!**

.....100 Bible verses about Christian persecution

When we read about Believers persecuted for their faith,

feel like— **“There’s nothing I can do!”**

- Our hearts yearn for a way to ease the hardship of Christians.....

Who are **Discriminated** / **Harassed** / **Beaten** **Imprisoned** / even **Killed**
.....by those who oppose Jesus Christ.

- Many cases, **We live thousands of miles away**

- We feel **over-extended just managing our own** families and responsibilities

Yet, we are told to..... [Hebrews 13.3 NIV NIV]

Remember the prisoners, as though you were in prison with them, and the mistreated, as though you yourselves were suffering bodily.

SO... WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP THOSE CHRISTIANS.... SUFFERING PERSECUTION TODAY??

One of the most powerful ways to help is...



A. **PRAYER** Matter of fact.....

- The FIRST request by persecuted Christians is ALWAYS THE SAME...
"PRAY FOR US!"

Paul says...  [Ephesian 6.18]

Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.

- Prayer is the greatest source of help anyone can offer to the persecuted church around the world

WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY??

(Quickly 5 points that Open Doors Ministries give)



1. Pray that whatever their circumstances, God will give persecuted Christians the right words.

[Ephesian 6.19-20] Paul asks fellow believers to:

...pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God's mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God's ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.

- We think many would only ask for deliverance....
- Those who are persecuted want to represent Jesus well!

(Story of women in Asia imprisoned... speaking right words)

Quickly



2. Pray persecuted Christians will understand and find peace in the sufficiency of God's grace, even in their weaknesses.

- While facing physical threat...
 - Christians must make instantaneous choices under great pressure
 - Feel they are NOT prepared!

...“My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.” -2 Corinthians 12.9

Quickly




3. Pray that Christians facing hardship will draw from a source of power larger than themselves.

- Often Per.Christ. have little to no control over their own lives
 - Battle governments trials that are UNFAIR...
 - MORE POWERFUL THAN THEIR RESOURCES....
 - Pray that they can RELY UPON GOD'S Power

2 Corinthian 1.7-9 - We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us. We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead.


Quickly

 **4. Pray God would be present with persecuted Christians in their hardship, protecting them according to His will.**

- Sometimes it IS God's will that some Christians undergo tremendous trials
- NOT BECAUSE GOD LOVES THEM LESS....
- Jesus Himself faced unjust trials.... **and He prayed for it to pass**
- **THIS... is what we pray for brothers & sisters suffering**
 - *"Yet not my will, but Yours be done"* God had a purpose
- Like peter in prison, we pray for their release! Pray for release!

BUT we also pray that if God's plan is... that He would supernaturally strengthen believers

Quickly

 **5. Pray their witness would inspire those who seek to harm them.**

Luke 6:27-31 says.... *“But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”*

- Paul & Silas (Acts 16) prayed and sang in prison
- Their behavior was watched
- Shared Gospel!!

(Story of man in prisoned, wife labor camp, son parentless...
Prayed continuously.... even for jailor)

IN ALL YOUR PRAYER..... 2 Corinthians 1:11 New Living Translation (NLT)

And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety.

In Addition to Prayer....



ENCOURAGE THOSE UNDER PERSECUTION

- Writing Letters

- Remind them they're NOT ALONE
 - Believers around the world are PRAYING for them
 - Brings HOPE / PEACE / ENCOURAGEMENT
-stand strong in persecution



[VIDEO: Letter Writing]

Matthew 25.36 *I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'*

- Take home information and write a letter!!!



SUPPORT MINISTRIES THAT HAVE A PRESENCE IN AREAS OF PERSECUTION

- OPEN DOORS MINISTRY

(Brother Andrew's smuggled Bibles into Communist nations)



[John 16.33] Jesus said.....

I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

- Evangelicals are growing at a rate three times faster than the world's population growth rate and are the world's ONLY body of religious adherents who are growing by means of conversion. In 2000, evangelicals had an annual growth of almost 5%, while Islam grew at half that rate.
- In China, the Protestant church had maybe 1,260,000 members in 1949. Today the church has grown to at least 100 million members.
- In Africa alone, the rate of church growth has been nothing short of staggering, skyrocketing from an estimated 10 million Christians in 1900 to 360 million in 2000.
- The church in Sudan is the fastest growing church in the Muslim world; this despite facing some of the most horrendous persecution known to man in recent years.

- In Ethiopia, the church has exploded. In 1960, evangelicals numbered 200,000 and made up 0.8% of the population. In 40 years, by 2000, the church has grown to nearly 12 million, making 20% of the population. This has taken place despite great persecution during the communist era of 1974-1991. Today, converts in rural areas face great persecution: stoning, bombing of church buildings, discrimination, expulsion from home, driven from their villages en mass.
- India (who have the second largest population in world) now has 10 churches with more than 10,000 members and 30 that have more than 3,000 members. In 1999, one church leader reported baptizing 2231 in a single day. Some Indian denominations are reporting that they are planting a new church every day.
- Among the Hmong people of northern Vietnam, there were NO evangelical Christians in 1989. In 11 years, by 2000, they numbered over 175,000. All of this church growth has taken place while being brutally oppressed by Vietnamese authorities.

CLOSE _____

Remainder of POST from Prager University:

Matthew 10.22 - "You will be hated by everyone because of me,.. but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."

Jesus said that, bro! Christians will be hated by everybody because of His name! Jesus didn't say that "You will be loved by everyone because of my name." or "You'll live happily always, never get hurt, get comfort every time, and everybody will accept you."

SEE? As a christian, WE HAVE TO BE GRATEFUL THAT OUR LORD JESUS' WORDS IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW.

WE DON'T NEED TO BLAME THE OTHERS. WE HAVE TO PRAY FOR EVERYONE THAT HURTS US. REMEMBER WHEN JESUS SAID THAT WE HAVE TO LOVE AND PRAY FOR OUR ENEMIES? DID YOU FORGET? OR MAY BE YOU NEVER READ THE SCRIPTURE?

WAKE UP, CHRISTIANS! FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS NEAR! DON'T BE WEAK. KEEP THE PRAYERS, KEEP READING THE BIBLE, AND KEEP SUPPORTING EACH OTHER! GOD BLESS YOU