

International Day Of Prayer For The Persecuted Church

Hebrews 13:3

Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body. (NASB)

Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies. (NLT)

Today we in the American church must remind ourselves of the reality faced by our brethren worldwide

Since the birth of the Church more than 70 million Christians have been killed for their faith in Jesus Christ

At this moment more than 200 million Christians are living under persecution

It is estimated that this year 175,000 Christians will die for their faith this year

- 1 every 182 seconds (3 minutes)

More Christians have been martyred in the last 100 years than in the preceding 1,900 years combined

- **in the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and Africa**, they are being martyred at the rate of **19 per minute** today
- while millions more lose their jobs, homes, face imprisonment, torture and are maimed for their faith in Christ¹

Normal For Christianity

Matthew 24:9

Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.

John 15:18-21

18 If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.

¹ <http://www.jesusdrivenlife.org/myopia.htm>

19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you...

21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

1 John 3:13

Do not marvel, brethren, if the world hates you.

American/Western Christianity is an anomaly

1 Peter 4:1

So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too.

The evidence of 2 kingdoms in conflict

Persecution comes from Religious Leaders, Governments, and the General Population

Acts 5:17- 18 (Persecution from religious leaders)

But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy.

and they laid there hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail

Acts 12:1-3 (Persecution from the government)

1 Now about that time **Herod the king** laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them.

2 And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword.

3 ... he proceeded to arrest Peter also

Acts 16:22-24 (Persecution from the general population)

22 **The crowd rose up together against them** (Paul and Silas), and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods.

23 When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely;

24 and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Today:

Religious Leaders	(Muslim and Hindus)
Governments	(China, Eritrea, Laos, N. Korea)
General Population	(Sudan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan, Mexico)

Pastor Tec in Tijuana:

*"Pastor Tec related that he had been driven to the drop-off point in the back of a pick-up truck that was also carrying buckets of gravel and sand. he said that his kidnapers dumped him on the ground, covered him loosely with the sand and gravel, then shot at him with what sounded like automatic weapons. He remembered praying while the bullets hit around him, but none of them actually struck him... after waiting for a while after the shooting, Pastor Tec was able to move the sand and gravel off of him enough to be found by arriving police officers who were apparently attracted by the sound of gunfire."*²

What can we do right now?

The protocol of the historic Church:

Acts 12:5

So Peter was kept in the prison, **but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.**

Romans 15:30-31

Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to **strive together with me in your prayers** to God for me, that I may be delivered...

2 Corinthians 1:8-11

8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life;

9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;

² <http://www.persecution.org/suffering/newsdetail.php?newscode=8842>

10 who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us,

11 you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor **bestowed on us through the prayers of many.**

2 Thessalonians 3:1-2

Finally, brethren, **pray for us** that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you; and that we **may be delivered** from perverse and evil men...

Philippians 1:19-21

For I know that this shall turn out for **my deliverance through your prayers** and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

For I know...

- Prayer changes things!!! (Ex. Pastor Tez)
- There are **210 countries** that have lengthy history of persecution, but are now fully evangelized³
- **"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church"** (Tertullian)

Ministry around the world today

"In the death camps I knew that there were people praying for me. It gave me the spiritual strength I needed to live as a Christian and to trust God. It is the same for everyone in the camps and prisons today." Underground Church pastor, Cambodia⁴

Video

Ways to pray:

1. That they would experience complete trust in God.

- [2 Corinthians 1:8-9](#) "For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction

³ *World Christian Encyclopedia* (vol. 1), 11.

⁴ <http://www.persecutionblog.com/>

which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves **in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead**"

2. That they will endure.

- [Hebrews 10:36](#) "For you have need of endurance".

3. That they will love Christ far more than life itself.

- [Revelation 12:10-11](#) "they overcame (Satan) because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, **and they did not love their life even to death.**"
- [Philippians 1:21](#) "For to me, to live is Christ, and **to die is gain.**"
- [Acts 20:24](#) "I (Paul) do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course."

4. That they will love their enemies.

- [Luke 6:27-31](#) "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.**"

5. That they will rejoice in sharing the sufferings of Jesus so that they will rejoice even more when Christ comes.

- [Hebrews 10:34](#) "...accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one."
- [Matthew 5:12](#) "Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
- [1 Peter 4:13](#) "but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation."
- [Acts 5:41](#) "So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name."

6. That they will remember their unbelievable future glory.

- [Romans 8:18](#) "For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

Some More Prayer Points:

Pray for those in prison that they would know they are not forgotten. "Remember the prisoners as if chained with them since you yourselves are in the body also."

- [Hebrews 13:3](#)

Pray that the needs of the families of martyrs would be met abundantly. "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think, according to the power that works in us."

- [Ephesians 3:20](#)

Pray that Christians would love those who are persecuting them. "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

- [Matthew 5:44](#)

Pray that persecuted Christians would preach the Gospel bravely. "Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly as I should."

- [Ephesians 6:19-20](#)

Pray that the government and prison officials would be drawn into a relationship with Christ.

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who has sent me draws him; and I will raise him at the last day."

- [John 6:44](#)

Pray for restricted nations. "And nations will come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising."

- [Isaiah 60:3](#)

More...

The Lord will give courage to His people who are enduring persecution for His Name

Churches facing government opposition will stand firm in their ministry

Christians who have been left without pastors and teachers may be kept strong in their faith

Christians who have been imprisoned for their faith will be released safely

Pray against the increasing problem of young Christian girls being kidnapped, raped and forced to marry

Christian pastors will be kept from danger and strengthened in their faith as they care for the people of God

New converts may be protected and provided for should their family turn against them.