

Persecuted Church Sunday (11.05.17)

Big Idea: We remember to pray for our brothers and sisters around the world who are persecuted for their faith.

Fallen Nature: We have enough trouble of our own and we forget to remember. Plus nothing ever seems to matter. Nothing ever changes

Desired Result: That we would pray today and that we would adopt a country to pray for this year.

Intro: Slides of perspective

Transition: We should remember to pray for the Persecuted Church in the world.

(Why)

I. Because it is a Command Heb 13:3

**Slide 1: maybe a fire chief calling out directions
Or a drill sergeant marching troops
Or a coach yelling instructions to their team.**

A. It is one in a series of commands - concluding remarks

- V1 Keep on Loving
- V2 Entertain strangers
- V3 Remember those in prison
- V4 Keep the marriage bed pure
- V5 Keep yourselves free from love of money
- V7 Remember your leaders
- V9 Do not be carried away by strange doctrines
- V16 Do not forget to do good
- V17 Obey your leaders
- V18 Pray for us

B. Prisoners – those bound - idea is with regard to their faith

Slide 2: 1 Cor 12:26 If one part suffers every part suffers with it...

C. Remember -

- Imagine - yourself being there
- Imagine who they are - pastor, small group leader, Sunday School teacher
- Imagine yourself there with them.
 - What would you do all day?
 - What if one of you got sick?
- Imagine being cold and hungry
- Imagine being hurt
- Imagine not being allowed to come home

Remember to pray for them

Protect them (or release them)
Bless them ; use them
Remember to feed them
Remember to meet their basic needs (clothing, food, bedding, personal hygiene)

Remember to do what you can to gain the release of unjustly held prisoners

Teach: Christians are commanded to remember the persecuted.

Illus: Kenneth Bae and the missing dog

Appli: Somewhere in our quiet times we need to add prayers for the persecuted
Somewhere in our information should be information on missing disciples - subscribe to
Open doors
Somewhere some of our support should go to supporting those who are imprisoned for
Jesus' sake

II. **Because it is Good for Us** 2 Cor 1:5

Slide 3: *Bottle of vitamins*

A. God is the God of all comfort
Parakaleo - called alongside

B. Comfort is linked to sufferings v5

Increase suffering - increased comfort
V8ff they had lots of suffering

Slide 4: 2 Cor 12:23b-28

C. Distress for them is linked to comfort to us v6
1. salvation - they are distressed in bringing us the good news of the gospel and
meeting with great persecution, but we received the gospel
2. Comfort v7 If they can receive comfort then we can too - Example

D. Their comfort is linked to our comfort v6b
If we can endure suffering, then you can endure suffering

Teach: We should remember the persecuted church, because we need their strength.

Illus: Richard Wurmbrand - "Tortured for Christ" Romania - 3 years solitary confinement and
beatings

Opened the eyes of torture by communism to a western world

The church will probably lose its tax exempt status one of these days... comparatively
speaking... nothing

III. **Because They are at the Tip of the Spear** Acts 4:1-12

Slide 5: *The end of a spear*

- A. Their prisoner status enables them to talk to those otherwise inaccessible
- B. The message is crystal clear – v12
- C. The potential for cultural change is huge v4

Teach: The persecuted church carries with them the point of contact between forces of darkness and light.

Illus.; Read - Bae quotation

Appli: Pray that they share the gospel

Slide 6: *Pray for:*

Aaron, can you please rotate these slides... like 1 to 2 min per slide? Does that seem about right?

North Korea

- Pray for North Korean believers who are languishing in prison camps, and for the proclamation of the gospel both in and outside the prison walls.
- Also, pray that Christians in the country would have access to Bibles and fellowship
- Pray that God would open Kim Jong-Un's eyes to the surpassing glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Iraq

- Pray that God would use the remaining Christians to bring many Iraqis to Christ.
- Pray for the Christians who have been displaced internally and in neighboring countries.
- Pray for Iraqi believers who are attempting to rebuild their lives after being forced from their homes by ISIS.

Turkey

Pray for those who are labeled and treated as traitors after embracing the Christian faith.

- Pray for God to enable those whose lives are threatened to place all hope and trust in Him.
- Pray for converts from a Muslim background (MBBs) to minister graciously to their families.

Mexico

- Pray for believers in Mexico, as the levels of violence against them are extreme.
- Pray for believers whose families hinder them from practicing faith outside of Catholicism.
- Pray for the hearts of drug cartel members who kidnap, kill and terrorize Christians

Indonesia

- Pray for the safety of believers as they attend church.
- Pray for Christian congregations who cannot secure or have lost their church buildings.
- Pray for children torn between Christianity at home and Islam at school