

11/7/21

Sun am

A Church Persecuted

Matthew 10:16-39

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

This is a day that we are intentional about remembering and praying for the persecuted church – those around the world who are suffering for the sake of Christ.

- A Church Persecuted:
 - *Is Reality*
 - You will be delivered over
 - Not some super-sect of believer or only those in less than civilized societies. **All** who are Christ's should fully expect to be persecuted
 - We will be hated. And not just passively, but sought after. Betrayed
 - Have we counted the cost?
 - Oh, that we would be prepared to suffer persecution for the sake of Jesus. And may our persecuted brothers and sisters not be far from our minds and always in our prayers!
 - *Is Enduring*
 - Endures to the end and loves Him more than life
 - v22; Perseverance of the saints – those who are His will endure to the end.
 - *"Have you grace to be a martyr?" D.L. Moody was once asked. "No," he replied, "I have not. But if God wanted me to be one, he would give me a martyr's grace."*
 - v38-39; Holding onto Jesus to the end vs. Turning from Him to save his physical life. "Finds his life" – cherishing your life more than Him.
 - Rev 2:10-11 (to the church in Smyrna)
 - *Story from Jesus Freaks, p50
 - *Is Proclaiming*
 - Not silenced (lawyer up), but, not being focused on saving this physical life, seeing this persecution as an opportunity to proclaim Jesus
 - v18-19, 27, 32
 - Acts 5:29 "We must obey God rather than men" – Peter & crew
 - Paul in prison, Phil 1:12-1
 - *Wurmbrand story, p63

o Is at Peace

- v19, 26, 28-31

May our prayer for the persecuted include these three central things: **that they would endure** (that their faith may not fail); **that they would not be silent**, but continue to faithfully proclaim Christ; and **that they would sense the peace of Christ**, that passes all understanding