



Persecution—What if You Faced It?

We live in a secular world that is anti-Christ. Comfortable western Christians do not know much about persecution. However, more and more we are receiving reports that there are hundreds of Christians who are being persecuted for their faith in the 21st century. For some, it takes the form of direct abuse, beatings, imprisonment, or destruction of church buildings and other properties. For others, persecution is the sense of being a minority, marginalized in an increasingly secular world.

Many Nazarenes are among those being martyred for their faith. In the last 5 years, there have been at least 49 Nazarene martyrs; but as some of our Christian forebears wrote, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Gospel.” It is said that an average of 27 churches spring up in each place a martyr has died. Nothing can stop the progress of the Gospel.

Throughout scripture the Spirit of anti-Christ has always inspired persecution of God’s people. It opposed Moses and Elijah; it attempted to put Daniel and his friends to death. It killed many prophets of God. Jesus, our perfect example was persecuted to the point of death. The apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria because of persecution; it martyred Stephen (Acts 7:60), James (Acts 12:12), and Antipas (Rev. 2:13). What if it were you facing persecution in your Jerusalem or Samaria? Would you be able to say like Esther, “If I perish, I perish”?

The persecuted Christians in scripture were able to maintain their joy—even in prison—because of their uncompromising obedience to God’s will. They had no question about their message. They knew whose they were and demonstrated an internal testimony of the Holy Spirit who kept them singing: “I have a joy within—the world can’t have it, the world can’t give it, the world can’t take it away.”

On November 13, let us join Christians around the world as we observe the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. Encourage the people in your church not only to pray, but to fully support the World Evangelists Fund offerings. Do all you can to bring compassion and hope to a suffering world, especially those being persecuted.

“These things I have spoken unto you, . . . In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33. KJV).

Jennifer Brown,
Global NMI President

“It is said that an average of 27 churches spring up in each place a martyr has died.

