



Living for the Lord

Description

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:10)

Do you have a Bible in your home?

Do you have the freedom to read it whenever you want to?

Do you have worship music in your home?

Do you have the freedom to listen to it when you want to?

Do you have Christian literature in your home?

Do you have the freedom to read it when you want to?

Do you have the ability to pray in your home?

Do you pray with your children, your spouse, or as an individual?

Do you have a Christian bumper sticker on your car?

Do you wear Christian t-shirts?

Do you go to church on Sunday?

Are you a part of a Bible study?

Do you get together with Christian friends?

Do you own Christian media?

Do you own Christian pictures, paintings, or posters?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you are experiencing a kind of freedom that many people in this world do not get to experience. In fact, you are part of the 30 percent of the world's population who experience freedom of religion. Yes, "according to the results, that were published in December 2009, about one-third of the countries in the world have high or very high restrictions on religion, and nearly 70 percent of the world's population lives in countries with heavy restrictions on freedom of religion (Wikipedia)."

So why is it that we take it so often for granted? Why is it that the Bible collects dust on our shelves? And even those times that we read it, we forget to apply it. And what about that bumper sticker on the car. Does it say anything about the one in the car? And that t-shirt we wear, does it change the heart of the one wearing it? How about the Christian music, the company we keep, the Christian literature, and so much more? Have we taken it all for granted? There are people losing their lives every day for the sake of the Gospel and becoming imprisoned for giving their lives over to Jesus. Yet, we at times continue to live our lives in vain existence. Will we allow God to truly motivate us through His Word? Will we pick it up and make it a part of our daily lives?

Our brothers and sisters are losing their lives daily because they have found something worth living and dying for. Have we found something worth the same? What will it take to fight for our marriages? To say divorce is not an option. What will it take to protect our children and give them a promising future? To say no to wasting time and yes to giving time where it matters most. What will it take to stop spending money foolishly? To start giving it to the places that matter. First to God, the establishment of His church. Then to the places He designates in our lives. What will it take to stop fighting about unimportant issues? To start fighting together for the work of God's Kingdom. What will it take to live in harmony and peace? To forgive often and hold less judgment. What will it take to stop talking about others behind their back? To hold each other accountable.

We were not meant to battle each other. We were meant to go in to battle together. There are many countries who face a battle every day when they wake up. They cannot get the Word easily. They cannot worship God when they desire to. They cannot meet with others of the same faith whenever they choose to. They cannot simply serve God because that means giving up their very lives! Their testimony serves a strong witness to me, as I think about all the things I take for granted today and every day. May these things change today! Not tomorrow! They need to change TODAY!

Here is a story from a woman in Lithuania, taken from the book "Extreme Devotion":

The mood was somber, almost harsh. The Lithuanian court was meeting to determine the sentence for Nijole Sadunaite. Her "crime," like so many others', was simply being a Christian in a Communist nation.

Then the judge offered her a final chance to speak. He eagerly waited for the young woman to tearfully beg for mercy. Perhaps she would even renounce her ridiculous faith in God. Yet he was in for a surprise.

There were not tears from Nijole. Her face shone, and a beautiful smile began to form. Her

eyes held warmth, even for her accusers.

“This is the happiest day of my life,” said the condemned woman. “I am on trial for the cause of truth and love toward men.”

Now, every eye in the courtroom was on her. “I have an enviable fate, a glorious destiny. My condemnation here in this courtroom will be my ultimate triumph.”

The passion in her voice was unmistakable. “I regret only that I have done so little for men. Let us love each other, and we will all be happy. Only the one who has no love will be sad.”

She turned her attention away from the judge and peered into the eyes of other believers who watched the trial. “We must condemn evil, but we must love the man, even the one in error. This you can learn only at the school of Jesus Christ.”

Dear Father God, In my life I know I have looked for the easy way out many times, but it's time for things to change. My brothers and sisters are suffering daily for You in 70 percent of this world. That's astonishing! God, I pray that I will not take for granted the freedom I have to worship You, pray to You, and read my Word. May I continue to draw close to You and learn what it truly means to live a life surrendered to Your desires! May my life be all about You and not me! This life I live on earth is but a breath, a fleeting moment, compared to all of eternity in Your presence! I pray I learn how to do it well! May I learn the keys of faithfulness to You!

Faithfully Devoted to You,

Category

1. Following Jesus

Tags

1. Christian
2. Jesus
3. Persecution
4. Truth

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