

Standing with the Persecuted
International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. Hebrews 13:3

Theme: Stand with the persecuted as though you were the one suffering.

1. If you're aligned with Jesus, you're aligned with suffering.

For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him. Philippians 1:29

[Jesus]¹⁸ *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. "John 15:18-20*

[Paul] ¹⁰ *You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, ¹¹ persecutions, sufferings-- what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹² In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 2 Timothy 3:10-12*

2. If you're aligned with Jesus, you're to align with those suffering for Jesus.

³² *Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. ³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. Hebrews 10:32-33*

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How we can align with those suffering for Jesus:

1. Stay Aware

[Paul, writing from prison] ⁷ *Tychicus will tell you all the news about me... ⁸ I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹ He is coming with Onesimus... They will tell you everything that is happening here. Colossians 4:7-9*

2. Show Care

¹⁶ *May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. ¹⁷ On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me. ¹⁸ May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus. 2 Timothy 1:16-18*

3. Offer Prayer

¹⁹ *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, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. Ephesians 6:19-20*