

Articles and Sermons :: THE WAY OF THE CROSS

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Open Doors USA - Serving Persecuted Christians Worldwide

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Members of the persecuted church around the world have long understood the true significance of the cross of Christ. Pastor Allen Yuan in China, who spent almost twenty-two years in prison for his faith away from his large family, often talks about his sufferings over those years. But he invariably concludes with the statement, “They are nothing compared with the Cross!”

The best known and loved pastor in China was Watchman Nee who was martyred in the early 1970’s. One of his elderly co-workers said recently, “If we call ourselves Christians—people following Christ—we should know what road we are taking. Christ went the way of the Cross. We should be prepared to do likewise.”

A Canadian Christian aid worker was overwhelmed at the enormous need among the believers of southern Sudan. He recalls some children in a village wearing nothing but hand carved bone crosses fashioned in necklaces around their necks. He pointed to the cross on one emaciated child and questioned her with hand motions. She smiled broadly, took off the necklace and handed it to him.

His thoughtful analysis is this, “That little act symbolizes the state of the suffering church in Sudan. With absolutely nothing in the way of material possessions, they still have the cross of Jesus Christ. They are prepared to share its hope - even though it means death.”

Indian missionary and martyr, Sadhu Sundar Singh, wrote in his diary, “It is easy to die for Christ. It is hard to live for him. Dying takes only an hour or two but to live for Christ means to die daily .”

A thirty-two-year-old pastor works in upper Egypt, an area of intense persecution for Christians. He runs a day care center, a medical clinic, a literacy training program, as well as caring for the families of those in prison. He has been beaten twice by Muslim extremists and threatened daily with death. He knows they are trying to kill him...but he continues to bear his cross daily.

A leading pastor in Egypt shared about a parishioner who tearfully came for counseling. Young people she had trained at her work were recently promoted to be her supervisors. She was passed over solely because she was a Christian. The pastor concluded, “That’s the cross we must bear here in Egypt!”

The essence of these examples is that instead of exercising and asserting my will, I learn to cooperate with God’s wishes and comply with His will.

RESPONSE

Today I will walk the way of the cross with Jesus and comply with His will.

PRAYER

Pray for believers under severe persecution who today will take up their cross to follow Jesus.