

A Call to Pray for the Persecuted

Prayer is powerful, and one of the most important steps we can take to align ourselves with God's Kingdom and to stand with those suffering for their faith. Prayer is also the number one request given by those around the world who have experienced the most intense forms of persecution. For example, Abdullahi, a persecuted Christians, was asked, "If you could share one prayer request with churches outside of Somalia, how would you ask them to pray?" He quickly responded:

"Do not pray for an end to the persecution because without it we would die. But pray that the Lord will give us the courage to stand through it."

The following suggestions can help you as an individual to pray and to lead your church / small group to pray with the persecuted.

Pray as an Individual

Scholars note that approximately 7,000 Christians are killed for their faith annually. This means that on average, approximately 20 Christians are killed for their faith every day. What if each morning you woke up and prayed:

Lord, I do not know where the 20 who may die for their faith today are located but you do. Would you give them courage, protection and rescue? For the family members they will leave behind, will you give them hope, comfort and ongoing financial provision?

Pray as a Small Group

Would you lead your small group to become Global Impact Prayers who intentionally stand with brothers and sisters around the world:

Once a month, preferably on the first weekend of the month, would you lead your small group to pray around the world for Christians facing some of the most severe persecution? Using the country specific prayer sheets within 10 minutes you can lead your small group in an expertly-reviewed overview of the country, read a connected Bible passage, and corporately pray around specific points.

Pray as a Church

During your Sunday night or Wednesday night gatherings, use these prayer sheets once a month to help your church become more intentional in their prayers for the persecuted.

Encourage your small group leaders to accept the challenge to lead their small group to pray for the persecuted with insight and specificity.

Dedicate the conclusion of a service to encouraging individuals to come to the altar and pray for those suffering for their faith.

A Prayer Challenge Story

Lolade and her family lived in northeastern Nigeria and had tried to flee Boko Haram. However, Lolade and the children were separated from her husband. She came across someone whom she knew very well, an individual with whom she had gone all the way through school. What she did not know is that he had become a Boko Haram sympathizer and he led her and the two children directly into the arms of the terrorist organization.

She spent two months as a prisoner in a compound alongside her two children and forced to work against her will. One night she saw an opening and Lolade put one child on her shoulders and one child on her back, scaled the compound wall and ran into the forest to escape.

After describing what had been a horrific ordeal, Lolade was asked if she had any specific prayer requests or messages she wanted to communicate to the church beyond Nigeria. Lolade replied:

“I pray that God should not allow this kind of situation to come into the West.”

If those who have been captured and persecuted are praying for us, will we do the same for them?

