

Learning How To Overcome Persecution from the House Churches In Iran

by Edgar Reich

This sermon focuses on the incredible growth of Christianity in Iran despite severe persecution, highlighting the commitment of believers to share the word of God even at the cost of their lives. It draws attention to the examples of pastors and Christians enduring torture and suffering for their faith, emphasizing the joy and privilege they find in suffering for Christ. The message challenges listeners to boldly share the gospel, overcome persecution through reliance on Jesus, testify to His goodness, and be willing to lay down their lives for the sake of the gospel.

Duration: 8:28

Scripture: John 16:2, Revelation 12:11, Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 1:8, Matthew 10:32, Philippians 1:29, Romans 8:18, 1 Peter 4:16, Hebrews 13:3, Matthew 16:24

Topics: "Perseverance in Faith", "Boldness in Evangelism"

Description

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Transcript

Thank you for joining me again this afternoon. I would like to discuss with you overcoming persecution based on the underground church in Iran. In Iran in the 1970s there were a few hundred Christians left and the world was saying that Christianity is dead in Iran in the Middle East and yet God has done a mighty, mighty miracle that today there are over one million believers in that country by the mercy of God and he has done great things and such great things came also through the commitment of Christians to do that which they're taught in scripture, to share the word of God.

They became witnesses, witnesses unto death. They became martyrs, many of them and their blood drenched the ground for new growth. It was like water to water the seed of God and his word is seed.

Now in John chapter 16 it tells us in 16 verse 2, they will put you out of the synagogues. Yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God's service. There is a famine of God's word in many of the churches.

They're now permitting evil and here it says that they will put you out of the synagogues. This is they will put you out of churches if you continue to speak the truth and beloved, I hope you will speak the truth because the Iranian sisters and brothers are an example to us. Pastor Nadarkhani in prison and tortured today says the word of God tells us to expect to suffer hardship and dishonor for the sake of his name.

Our Christian confession is not acceptable if we ignore the statement, if we do not manifest the patience of the Lord in our sufferings. Another pastor who is in prison today, his name is Benam Irani, was held in solitary confinement in a very small cell. He was beaten by fellow prisoners.

He was tortured. The room was so full the prisoners were not able to lie down and yet the guards and other inmates have caused him in addition great harm. His hair has turned white and his friends fear for the loss of the use of his foot due to a severe injury and part of his organs are damaged.

He has lost consciousness and this is what he wrote from prison, beloved sisters and brothers in Christ. He wrote, despite the pressure and difficulties in prison, I'm pleased to share what is like a fountain, my Christian joy within me in this new Christmas day to come and I know that you who are the saints and spiritual children of God are acquainted with this joy. You see it is the joy of God, it is the joy of the Holy Spirit and he even counts it a privilege to suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ and beloved, you have not been trained to look forward to such suffering on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ but the word of God is full to help you to do so.

And then Pastor Irani continues, as the minister of God I allow myself to announce you to be happy, know that all the happiness that we have on earth is the first fruit of that great joy provided for us in heaven. You see the joy in heaven is everlasting, this is but a moment and if we are permitted to give our lives that others might believe, that others might see that we really mean a business on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ, then we become a shining example, we become a shining star that we might be found worthy to suffer. A Christian who was jailed in Iran and was a leader was told if the Christians would simply agree to stop evangelizing, all the prisoners would be freed.

Church leaders point here to the fact that these are real Christians in Iran, they follow the instructions of the Lord to share their faith and then there's Holy Spirit boldness in all of the people even out on the streets and a taxi driver, he's an example of boldness, he has a cross dangling from the front mirror of his taxi, he has a Bible on his seat next to him, he realizes and knows that his livelihood, his freedom and even his life are at stake, but he says how can I not share this incredible wonderful news and I Iranian believe it is a sin not to share the good news of the gospel and beloved we have been so conditioned by humanism and even by a mind that has been affected by our surroundings so very much that we do not want to share the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ. What about you and me beloved? Do you feel you're a Christian? Well the Holy Spirit will empower you, it says in Acts 1.8, when he the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem which is your home city, in Judea which is your home state, in Samaria which is your neighboring state and unto the uttermost parts of the world and you're saying to me yes brother I want to do it with you, yes I will, how do I do that? And please turn with me to Revelation chapter 12 verse 11 and there it gives us three helps in this verse in Revelation chapter 12 11 and they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony and they did not

love their lives to the death. So here are three parts.

They overcome this terrible persecution by relying on the Lord Jesus Christ. Beloved, if you do not know him yet, ask him to come into your life, ask him to save you, ask him to forgive your sins, beg him to rescue you for eternity even if it means you're laying down your life. So you draw near to Jesus in the blood of the lamb, he will cover you, he will help you at times when the persecution comes.

And then the second part is they overcame him by the word of their testimony. So beloved, please open up your mouth, share that you have a future and a hope because it is a bright and shining incredible future, a future without tears, a future without sorrows, a future without pain and you will be with God, you will see him face to face and you will have an eternity of goodness, of love, of precious interaction with our eternal father. So please share your witness and then they did not love their lives unto death and again you are conditioned in the churches today to only ask to receive but God may ask you to make a choice.

Will you follow me? Will you give a witness to others and will you even follow me into death? Thank you for watching and may God help you.

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