

# Christian Missions to the Communist World International - Pt2

by Richard Wurmbbrand

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*Richard Wurmbbrand's sermon emphasizes the importance of Christian unity and the profound spiritual truths discovered through suffering in communist prisons.*

**Duration:** 1:14:50

**Scripture:** Matthew 12:36, Matthew 17:2, Romans 12:15, Ephesians 4:32, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Peter 3:8, Revelation 22:17

**Topics:** "Missions"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experience of being imprisoned for 14 years in communist jails. He talks about the physical hardships they endured, such as heavy chains and beatings. Despite the persecution, the speaker emphasizes the importance of revolutionizing the world with love instead of hatred. He shares a powerful story of a pastor who faced the choice of denying his faith or facing torture, highlighting the unity and interconnectedness of believers as one body in Jesus Christ. The sermon also acknowledges the generosity of the congregation in supporting the families of Christian martyrs.

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## Transcript

I would remind you that this dear man and his good wife represent those who, under God, who in a sense have helped to save this generation. You know, people, people look at a threat and get very worried. Somebody else gets concerned and does something about it and the threat is removed.

And the casual would say, well maybe we shouldn't have been worried at all. But men like Pastor Wurmbbrandt have caused people to pray, have caused people to give, have caused many folks who sit in darkness, who love our Lord Jesus Christ, to have hope. And because of this I believe we sit in relative freedom tonight.

We have many reasons for which to thank God for our brother and the many like him. But this is just one of them. And may we not forget it.

Amen. English speaking people usually start speeches with the words, ladies and gentlemen, which is surely wrong. The start should be men and gentle ladies.

The ladies are much gentler. So I will start like this. And dear brethren and sisters, first of all I have to apologize for speaking to you being seated.

I did it also yesterday, but perhaps there are some here who were not yesterday. During these 14 years in communist jails we almost never walked. We had heavy chains at our feet, sometimes 20 kilograms, sometimes 50 pounds.

And there were beatings with rubber truncheons on the soles of the feet. And now it is difficult for me to stand for a long time. It is difficult even to wear shoes.

That is why perhaps for the first time in your life you see a barefoot preacher before you. In the part of scripture which has been read to you in Nehemiah chapter 4 verse 19, Nehemiah says to the other rulers and nobles of the Jewish people, the work is great and large and we are separated upon the wall one far from another. How far we are one from another.

If I would ask tonight, lift your hands those who are Catholics, some would lift their hands. And those who are Anglicans, another group. And those who are Baptists, another group.

And those who are Pentecostals, and those who are I don't know what. We are separated from each other. And the names don't say yet the totality of separation because Anglicans don't agree with each other and Baptists don't agree with each other.

And there exists dividends of opinions also among the Catholics and among the Pentecostals and so on. We come from different backgrounds, we have had different education, we have had different circumstances of life. And this has separated us greatly from each other.

We all look to things from different viewpoints and that is how we arrive even to great conflicts among ourselves. Everyone is sure that he is right. It is very difficult to arrive to be one heart and one soul as the first Christians were.

Now I have been a prisoner 14 years. Thousands are prisoners today. In Vietnam, in Red China, we know about one single prison.

From there we have the very fact that 400 Catholic priests are in that one prison alone. But they persecute the Protestants as much as the Catholics. We don't have the figure of the Protestant pastors who are there.

And then there are not only the priests and the pastors, there are also the laymen. A multitude of Christians are in prison in Red China today. In Russia, nobody can tell the figure how many Christians are in prison.

Others are in Romania, others in Albania. In Albania there are not many because they shoot them very easily. One Catholic priest, Stephen Curti, was sentenced to death for having baptized one single child.

Christians are in jail in Angola, in Mozambique, in Ethiopia, the African communist countries. In Cuba, the brethren Valladares, Gomez, Nobel are in jail since 20 years for their faith, which is not much, because brother Kharapov, a Russian Baptist pastor, is in jail in Russia since 26 years, which is not much, because brother Paulitis, a Catholic layman, is in jail in Russia for his faith since 34 years, which is not much, because the Orthodox monk Mikhail Lershov is in jail for his faith in Russia since 43 years. So many

Christians are prisoners today.

How was I treated? How are they treated? How do the communists treat their Christian prisoners? You will wonder about what I tell you today. I don't know one single Christian who should have been or should be the prisoner of the communists. I have not been a prisoner of the communists.

In the first verse of the epistle of Paul to Philemon, he writes, I, Paul, prisoner of whom? Not of Nero, not of the Caesar, a prisoner of Jesus Christ. We have been prisoners of Jesus Christ, and I must tell you, our jailor treated us very, very well. Very, very well.

We have known all his comforts and all his meekness and all his goodness all these years. We have no complaint. On the contrary, we can be thankful to him for what he has done for us.

These prison years have served us to cleanse our minds from many things which are superfluous, which are not needed. The communists gave us almost no food. We had times when we got one slice of bread a week.

The usual food was soup of some dirty potato peels, cabbage with unwashed intestines, and other soup in which a few peas swam, but you could number how many peas were in that soup. There were also the worms from these peas, because they were the worst of peas, and so on. We had no food.

We were doped with drugs which would destroy our minds. I have been a drug addict for 10 years without my will, but I've been a drug addict. They put drugs into our soup, into our coffee.

As often as we ate and drank something, we took drugs, and these drugs destroyed our minds. We forgot more and more. I told yesterday already, I will repeat just in a few words.

One evening, I remembered vaguely that I'm a Lutheran pastor, but I could not remember who Luther has been. I saw jubilated on that evening, because I made a big discovery. You can be a Christian without knowing who Luther has been.

I had not known it until then, but men have been Christians 15 centuries without knowing about Luther, and others realized that you can be a Christian without knowing who Calvin has been, and others were Christians without knowing who the Pope is. The old Pope might have died. We had no newspaper.

We had no radio. We did not know who the new Pope is. There was one name which we had not forgotten.

First, we forgot theology. Then we forgot the whole Bible. Everything which we had ever learned.

I forgot the Lord's Prayer. I tried one evening to say it. I did not remember it anymore.

We forgot more and more. And then a very strange thing happened. God is the truth.

The Bible is the truth about the truth. Theology, if it is the right one, is the truth about the truth about the truth. A good sermon, if you hear it, value it.

It's very rare. And if you hear it, be thankful to God you have heard the truth about the truth about the truth about the truth. The truth is God alone.

And around this sole truth, God, we have built a scaffold of so many theories, of so many doctrines, of so many creeds, of so many books, of so many sermons, of so many all kinds of things, and people arrive with very great difficulty to the truth itself. Not because of the lies, but because of the many truths which are said about the truth. Our jailer, Jesus Christ, whose prisoners we were, freed us from many truths about the truth.

And when we had forgotten everything, something very strange happened. I could not pray anymore. My mind did not work.

When the doping became less and less, then there was such a thaw. Better attitudes of the communists. I began to remember what has happened.

And I knew that before the complete blackout, my last prayer had been, Jesus, I remember you have said, the Son of Man will come in the hour when you will not think, and on the day when you will not know. Well, Lord, that is the hour when I don't think anymore. I can't think.

This is the day when I know nothing more. And now you have to keep the promise and to come. And there he was.

We had lost all the truth about the truth. And we had the truth. It was so beautiful, I could not describe it in words.

The bride was in the embraces of the bridegroom. The prisoner in the embraces of his divine jailer. It was a palace, that prison.

We received his fiery kiss. Flames of love burned around us. Angels sang.

But really, I would have to tell you, human tongue can't say the beauty of this wedding night, of this mystical union between the heavenly bridegroom and the bride. When the truth about the truth disappears, and you have the truth. Nehemiah says that in building Jerusalem, a holy city, but still an earthly city, it could not be done otherwise than one working in that part of the world and the other one there and the other one there.

And Nehemiah himself afterwards arrived to quarrel with his co-builders because he didn't like something. We there had finished building cities. Like Mary Magdalene, we sat quietly at the feet of Jesus.

There were martyrs everywhere to work. We sat quietly and listened to his voice. We could not distinguish very well words.

Our mind did not work anymore. But his melodious heavenly voice was enough for us. It was enough for us to look at him and to know he loves us and we love him.

And it was so quiet. It was beautiful in the silence of solitary cells. We were everyone alone in a cell 30 feet beneath the earth, never seeing sun, moon, snow, flowers, stars, mountains, seas.

I had forgotten that these exist. We never saw a color. For 10 years, I've seen only the gray walls of the cell and our gray uniforms.

I had forgotten that blue and green and yellow and violet and pink exist. Our outward world was gray. Nothing to hear and nothing to see.

This monotony of prison life was disturbed only from time to time. They took you out for a beating or for a torture. With the time, the beatings and the tortures became boring.

They were always the same. And they did not impress us anymore. I wonder how people can go to a football match.

I don't criticize anybody for going. But I myself, now the ball is here. Leave it here if they wish it to be here.

Then you toss it to that side, and then they toss it to this side, and then they toss it to that side. And some, I asked them, why don't you go to church? They say to go to church, it is boring. And I said, is any sermon more boring than to throw one in the same ball from one side to the other during three hours? There, nothing happened outwardly.

But inwardly, the bride of Christ had found peace. She didn't work anymore at earthly things. Not even at heavenly earthly things.

At noble earthly things. There exists another Jerusalem, which we don't have to build. It comes finished.

From above, it is not built by human hands. And there, every citizen of that city is one soul. Don't mind if I cough from time to time.

That is a reminder of prison times. And with us in Romania, we have a proverb. As long as a man coughs, he is safe.

No priest will bury him. In that heavenly city, all citizens are one soul and one heart. Undisturbed.

If I remember, if I look back to these 14 years of prison, and my wife looks back to her prison life, which was much more difficult than mine, because women have suffered much more than men have suffered. We look back to these years as beautiful years. Beautiful years.

In the embraces of a bridegroom, years of spiritual serenity. And if we can be helpful to the Church abroad, to the Church in the free world, you will be asked tonight to help these persecuted Christians. You will help that they might have Bibles.

There are very few Bibles. That they might have broadcasting of the Gospel. Thousands of Christians are in prison.

Their children hunger. A piece of bread is needed for them. And not only bread, they are children.

And they like a doll too, and a ball too. And those children should also have a doll, not only our children. You will be asked to help.

But they can help us by communicating to us a reality which they have discovered in great sufferings, when the words about reality have been forgotten. Only God is God. Every explanation what God is, is an explanation what God is.

It is not God. Only God is God. Every doctrine about God is a doctrine about God.

It is not God. Only God is God. Even the word God is not God.

In English it is God. In Russian it is Bog. And in Romania it is Dumezhou.

And in French it is Dieu. And in Hungarian it is Ishten. And in, I don't know what other languages, otherwise.

Even the word God is not connected with God. Only God is God. And around this reality of God, we have created so many other things.

So many explanations, and so many doctrines. And in prison, we have arrived to the simplicity of faith. The more the years of prison accumulated than we were in common cells, the more we forgot the things which we had known before.

The more we became one. It was such a shock for me, when I saw a Jesuit priest. Now you know that Protestants, some of them, believe that the Catholics are idolaters.

But there exists something worse than the Catholics. The Jesuits are much worse. Now I had near me a Jesuit priest dying, because of tortures endured for his faith in Christ.

And his last words, while his face shone in ecstasy, he said, Beloved Jesus. And he gave his ghost. It was a very great shock for many Protestants.

But the Jesuits, and the Catholics, and the Orthodox too, saw Protestants dying for their faith. And also with similar words, Oh my God, oh beloved Jesus, who I expect to be saved through his blood, and so on. And more and more, the words which separate us, as they separated the Jews in the time of Nehemiah, one on this side of the wall, and the other on the other side of the wall.

You are right, who is it? He is right, yeah. These words disappeared, and we lived on this reality. And out of this reality came splendid attitudes of heroism.

At a certain moment, we had to work at a canal. A canal was built in our country. In communist countries, there exists no unemployment.

That is a great benefit of socialism. No unemployment. Every unemployed man is arrested, and put to work for free, as a prisoner for the state.

And he works 15 hours a day. Perhaps you recommend it to Mr. Fraser. I heard you have the problem of unemployment in Australia.

No unemployment, neither in Russia nor in Romania. They don't have such thing. They arrested all the unemployed.

We were, at this canal, 150,000 prisoners. There were those really condemned, and then these unemployed. And we had to work 15, 16 hours a day.

There was no Christmas, and no Easter, and no Sunday, nothing. Day after day. We had very little food.

The work was very hard. Cats were eaten at the canal, and dogs, and rats, and snakes, and whatever you could find, and crows, and so on. My wife, at this canal, she has grazed the grass, as cattle do.

And we were happy when we had it. And at this canal, there were many units. Thieves, and murderers, and all kinds of politicals, and so on.

And there was a special unit. A unit of extermination, where it was even worse than with the other units. They were all bishops, priests, pastors, Muslim mullahs, and Jewish rabbis, and whosoever you like, and laymen, whosoever was in prison for his religious activity.

They formed a unit, a part. And over this unit, murderers have been put as surveyors. They were sentenced to life.

And they were promised that if you torture the Christians, then you will be released. The communists never kept this promise. But these poor criminals, having a hope given to them that they will be released, they competed with each other.

Who can torture the Christians better? And now, one day, the political officer of the canal, a lieutenant, he came to inspect that unit. Everyone stood at attention before him. And he, just at random, called out a young man, and asked him, what have you been in your civilian life? And he said, Lieutenant, what I have been, I will be forever.

I am a minister of God. Then the lieutenant smiled sarcastically. What about now? Do you still believe in Jesus? Now, the pastor knew that if he says, yes, I believe, he will be beaten, he will be tortured.

It might be the last day of his life. Am I well heard in the rear? Please lift your hands if you hear well. He knew it might be the last day of his life.

He was silent a few seconds, seconds long as eternity, because eternity was decided in those seconds. Then his face began to shine. We are very old-fashioned Christians behind the Iron Curtain.

We still believe the Bible, literally, exactly as it is written. We have here, every year, some new Bible and some new interpretation. And some believe a half of the Bible, and some three quarters, and some a quarter.

We believe the Bible, because for us, if we remember or we read the Bible, it does not seem strange to us. If I read that on Mount Tabor, the face of Jesus was transfigured, we have seen such things. Not at the same level, surely.

Jesus was Son of God, and these were men. But we have seen transfigurations. The face of this pastor, his name was Kochanga.

The face began to shine. He opened his mouth. He did not speak yet.

But when he opened his mouth, for the first time I understood a Bible verse which had always seemed clear to me. The Lord says to us that we should not repeat vain words. Well, if he tells me not to say vain words, he also should not say vain words.

Why is it written in the Gospel, according to Matthew, chapter 5, verse 1, Jesus opened his mouth and spoke? No, that is surely a vain word. How should one speak with a shut mouth? Why does the evangelist say he opened his mouth and spoke? Only now I understood. The opening of the mouth was a gestural part.

He had not spoken yet. But everybody was overtaken by an awe. We knew a pearl will come out of this mouth.

And now I understood that probably something like this happened on the Mount. Jesus opened his mouth, he had not spoken yet. But everybody with respect waited a divine revelation will come.

And then with a very soft, modest, but very decided voice, he said, Lieutenant, when I became a Christian, and afterwards a pastor, I knew that thousands of Christians and thousands of pastors have paid with their life for what they believed and for the service which they brought. Lieutenant, I knew what I became. And as often as I ascended to the altar dressed in these beautiful costumes, I promised to God, if ever I will wear the uniform of a prisoner, then I will be surrounded by the respect and admiration of the Christians around.

If ever I will be surrounded by hatred in jail, I will also serve thee. Lieutenant, I pity you. Prison is such a poor argument against religion.

We have the truth, and you have a whip. We know the last reality, and you wish to destroy it with iron bars and with torches. If you would hang all mathematicians or torture them to death, two and two would still be four.

Truth can't be destroyed by tortures and by prisons and by killings. And our belief is as true as that two and two are four. I love Christ from all my heart.

I'm very sorry that I can't convey to you the tune where he said, I love Christ. We, all the others, we were ashamed because we, we believed in Christ. We hoped in Christ.

But this man loves Christ as a bride, loves the bridegroom as Juliet will have loved Romeo and died for him at the age of 14. This man spoke out of a passionate love towards Christ. Then he was taken from among us.

He was beaten. He was tortured. We don't know if he spoke about God.

He was real, and the reality lived in him. Christ lived in him and spoke from him. If a foolish government would give a law, every nightingale which will sing henceforth will be tortured to death.

What would nightingales do? They would sing. They have a song in their heart, and nobody can hinder the song. And we also have a song of love, of gratitude towards the one about whom our brother so beautifully sang.

He could have called 10,000 angels. He would not have had to endure everything which he endured. But he loved you.

He loved me. And he did not call angels. But he suffered gladly in order that we might be saved.

And there exist souls for whom these are not vain words repeated once a week in church. But they believe them wholeheartedly, and they love Christ with passion. I have had the privilege from God to meet such souls.

And there is such a serenity in them. St. Paul was in prison in Rome. I have visited that prison.

It is subterranean. It is an exact reproduction of the prison cell in which I have been. Also under the earth.

Also you sit on the concrete. Everything, just as it has been. It is the same torturer.

If he is called communist, or Nazi, or Roman emperor, or inquisition, or I don't know, all kinds of things. Whosoever has persecuted Christians. And when I say inquisition, I never say inquisition.

I say inquisitions. Because there have been many inquisitions. Of many kinds.

Not only Catholics have persecuted Protestants. Protestants have persecuted Catholics too, in certain places, and so on. And everywhere the suffering has been the same.

And when St. Paul sat there on the concrete, a prisoner in chains, you see there is a column to which he was tied when he was beaten. And when he was free a little bit, he wrote from there a letter. And he says, we are seated in heavenly places.

How in the world are we seated in heavenly places? There can't be a worse place than this. Well, the body is seated in heavenly places. The body is seated in prison.

But I am not only a body, I am a spirit. And my spirit is seated in heavenly places. And I have known such men.

They were taken to tortures from which they came out bleeding, and full with bruises, and teeth kicked out, and bones broken. And they looked upon the torturers as messengers of grace, if you can understand. I try to imagine, when I try sometimes to share the passion of Christ, I imagine how it had been when they had undressed him, and for the first time the lash of the whip fell on his back, and he had such terrible pain.

Well, he had a body just like mine, and he felt the pain, he had the same nerves. But in the spirit, that is what he had desired. That is what he had come for.

He knew that his blood will save you and me. And when he saw the first time from his front, from his chest, the blood gushing, he must have said in his spirit, hallelujah, so men will be saved. And when they put the crown of thorns and other blood ran down from the front, hallelujah, more will be saved.

And another lash, more will be saved. And another lash, more will be saved. And he was beaten from the top of the head to the feet, more and more will be saved.

And then they drove nails into his hands, into his feet. That is what he has come for, to save. And he knew that only his blood can save.

And I believe that his holy mother was also of such a high spirituality. She knew why he has come. She knew how she has brought him up.

She had given him as a child the prophets to read. And she knew that he is called upon to die for the salvation of men. As a mother, she must have wept.

She must have felt brokenhearted. But there must have been also a voice in her spirit, rejoice, mother of the Lord, because he really brings salvation through his death. Well, that is how I visualize the scenes when he was first whipped and then when he was crucified.

I have seen this on another level repeated. It is only his blood which saves. But the church since ever has this teaching that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.

It is that which makes the church to blossom. It is that which makes the church to be heroic, to be ready to fight for the holy cause. And I have known martyrs when they were beaten to the blood.

They also felt like this. Hallelujah! That is what I wished to be a Christian. Jesus has said, Whosoever wishes to come after me should deny himself.

I send you as lambs among wolves. I have given my life and my disciples can't be higher than the master is. And now I think that every one of you can learn from these persecuted Christians.

Everyone can. You have your sufferings. I know that in Australia you don't pass through the things through which Christians pass in communist countries.

But you have your sufferings. Some very unhappy marriages. Marriages can be terribly unhappy.

Terribly unhappy. Very bad relationships with children and with parents. Troubling your business.

Troubling your employment. You might be very sick. You might have been bereft of somebody beloved one.

Now all these things can be taken with a grudge and with resentment. But they can be taken also as messengers from God. Suffering beautifies us.

And suffering born with resignation, with patience, with love, and with joy serves to strengthen the church people see. Look what Christ can do to a human heart. How were we treated in prison? In one word, our jailer, Jesus Christ, treated us very well.

It was when I came to the West, I saw beauty shops. I don't know, do you have them in Australia too? Do you have such beauty shops there? Ladies, go on. We have them in America very much.

Beauty shops. Now I would say that prison has been for Christians a beauty shop. You have seen my wife sitting here.

You have seen how beautiful she is, no? She has been in the beauty shop of prison. Girls, ladies who have been there, you could see on their shining faces the things through which their past souls have been beautified. A Christian is a hospitable man.

He is hospitable not only towards guests. He is hospitable also towards sufferings when they come to him. These are methods of God to beautify our souls, to make us Christ-like.

What we have done in prison times? Well, we did not do much. We were seated in heavenly places. There is not much to be done there but to adore and to love and to be loved and to sing the praises of God.

And we sang. We sang even accompanied by musical instruments. The communists have been very nice to us.

There was no cell without musical instruments. Not pianos or organs. That would have been too expensive.

Not even mandolins. But they put chains on our hands and on our feet. And we discovered that chains are splendid musical instruments.

On that Christian soul, just cling, clang, cling, clang. Marching as to war, cling, clang, cling, clang. And then when we were in common cells, everyone had another kind of chain.

One was only iron. The other was iron mixed with a little bit of brass. With some it was rusted already.

With others it was not rusted. It was a new pair of chains. With others the chain was shorter.

With the other one it was longer. And every chain had another tune. And we could have bands.

Chains can be changed in musical instruments. Every scar can be changed in a star. Every problem can be changed in an opportunity.

And every tragedy can be changed in a triumph. This applies not only to Christian prisoners in communist lands. It applies also to you.

Because you also get scars in your life. And you have your difficulties. And now seated in these heavenly places, from the perspective of these years of suffering together with very holy men, out of whom many died, I look upon the things of this world, of the free world, and the things happening in your country too.

It looks to me like children's play. Children's play. I saw today one on the street selling newspapers.

He was from the Socialist Party. Fight against Reagan's bomb. I went to him.

I said, well, that's very fine. You fight against Reagan's bomb. Would you put next time, fight against Reagan's and Brezhnev's bomb? Why should we fight only against the American bomb? Why should we not fight also against the Russian bomb? It was so new for him that you must not be against the one and for the other.

You can be just against hatred and against killing. Whosoever does it. I've seen the big protests which you had in Australia and in New Zealand.

Really about a big, big problem. To play or not to play football with New Zealand. About this, men were arrested.

Policemen were injured. About the great question, to play or not to play. And your Prime Minister also said we should not play.

Because in South Africa, the blacks don't have all the rights. A few weeks after this, a delegation of the World Council of Churches came and said, wait a little bit, Australia. With you, the aborigines also don't have any right.

I can foretell you very, very shortly, you will have agitation in the whole world. Don't play football with Australia. And then there will be no football with New Zealand because they have a problem with the Maoris.

And do you know with whom you will play football? Only with the Russians who have killed 66 million people. Only with the Chinese. The Chinese communist government has killed 60 million.

You will play with Cambodia, where half of the population has been killed by the communists. With whom will you play? It's not a children's play all this discussion. Why do you play with Germany? The communists in Germany have created apartheid.

They've made a wall in the midst of the nation and they've separated half of the nation from another half of the nation. And nobody speaks about this. What about Russia, which persecuted the Jews? Everything is so childish, childish.

And you sit in heavenly places and you look to this. Look what Christians, some of them are Christians, speak about and protest about. Then I read about the great strikes which you have in your country.

Every week other strikes. And it is right. If I would be a worker in America, in Australia, I would also agitate for strikes.

You need urgently strikes to diminish your salaries. They are scandalously high. I tell it very honest.

Our mission works in some 50 countries of the free world. It works in India, too. I have been to India several times.

The average yearly income of an Indian, yearly income of an Indian, is \$200 a year. Who would not strike? In Australia, if we would have \$200 a month, they have \$200 a year. You will ask me, but how do they live on \$200 a year? They don't live on it.

They die on it. I've seen them die. I've been to Kolkata.

I've seen to Madras. You see hundreds of thousands living on the street, no sewage, no running water. They're on the street.

They live on the street. They mate on the street. Their children are born, and their children die without ever having bitten an apple or having seen a candy or a toy.

And Mother Teresa gathers them from the street. And in Mother Teresa's home, 80% die. It is too late when they come there.

But at least 20% are saved. And the others die decently. It is urgently needed that Australian workers and American workers and British workers should make big strikes.

We should not have these scandalous salaries. And the employers also should not have these huge profits. We should renounce in order that the others should have.

And everything is so wrong and so wrong. And the World Council of Churches supporting murderous guerrillas in Africa who kill instead of supporting families of Christians who are in prison. If you don't love your own family, how will you love strangers? And if you don't love the saints? So many children of Christian martyrs are hungry.

There are so many wrong, wrong things. Now, this year, in October, we have the commemoration of 400 years since the birth of a man, I believe you all know his name, 800 years since the birth of a man, Saint Francis of Assisi. He's called the man who was the most Christ-like who has ever lived in history.

He said we should love brother wolf, brother wolf. And there are others who don't love even brother lamb. They think to kill the lamb.

And we say to love the wolf. From heavenly places, looking upon the free world, we are revolutionists. We believe that this world must be revolutionized, but in the sense not of mutual hatred for race motives and

class motives and denomination motives, but it must be revolutionized in the spirit of love.

And I wish to give you just one example more. I was told when I came to Australia, here a sermon must be 20 minutes. And I stick exactly to this.

I never speak more than 20 minutes, only that my minutes are a little bit longer. With the inflation, you know, everything goes up. And so all prices went up, and my minutes also are no more 60 seconds.

But I will tell you just one episode more. If I will remember in the meantime a second episode, I will tell the second too. But now only one episode.

When I was in prison, I was very, very sick. I had the whole surface of both lungs, tuberculosis, four vertebrae caused by tuberculosis, intestinal tuberculosis, diabetes, jaundice, heart failure, all at the same time. Perhaps a few things more.

I don't remember them all. And I was dying. I was in a room for dying prisoners.

Around me people died. I was the only one who escaped alive from that cell. It was a cell reserved for the dying ones.

You were put there after a few days. You died. Others were brought, and others died, and so on and so on.

I survived in that cell two years and a half. Now I head to my right. I was laying in bed.

I could not move. To my right was a pastor. His name was Isku.

And he was dying. They tortured him to death. He was so serene, so quiet.

He knew in whom he had believed. It is written in John 5, 24, the Lord has said, Whosoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life, not will have it. Who does not have it, will not have it.

Who does not have it, will not have it. You can't have eternal life in the future. Who has eternal life, has it already now.

Some believe in the rapture of the church. Nobody will be raptured unless he is raptured already now. Unless he is in exodus already now, when he hears the beautiful name of Jesus.

This man had eternal life through the grace of God. And he was so quiet, so quiet. Smiled.

It is so nice to smile. I've seen so many triumphant smiles in prison. I told you yesterday, I believe, that repetition is not bad.

When you smile, eight muscles enter in action of your face. When you frown, 48 muscles. You spend six times more energy in frowning than in smiling.

It is wrong to frown. Every man who would spend \$60 for what he can buy with \$10, he would be considered a fool. And he smiled and was so beautiful.

He was at my right side, Isko. At my left side was Konstantinescu, the communist, who had tortured to death this pastor. He has also been imprisoned by his own comrades, tortured by his own comrades, and was dying as a result of this.

Never believe the fairy tale which you are told by anti-communists that the communists are anti-Christian. It is not true. Others say that the communists are anti-Jewish.

It's not true. The communists are simply anti. Anti everybody.

Even anti their own comrades. Khrushchev has kept his own wife in prison eight years. Probably he did not like her soup.

Now, I would say that for a bad soup, two or three years of prison would be a fair punishment, but eight years. And Stalin killed his own family. And he killed his comrades.

They hate each other. And if they quarrel with each other, they arrest you just as they arrest Christians and Jews, and beat them and torture them. And so it happens that this communist, who had tortured to death that pastor and many others, now he had been tortured to death.

And he died near me. He could not die. During the night, he would wake me and beg, Pastor, say a prayer for me.

I can't die. I have committed such horrible crimes. And I saw the agonizing pastor calling two other prisoners to support him and leaning on their shoulders.

Slowly, slowly, he passed my bed and sat down on the bedside of his murderer. And the murderer caressed his murderer on his head. Caressed.

I am a Christian today, because a Christian, when I was a hungry orphan child, despised hungry orphan child, a pastor had caressed me on my head and had told me a nice word. A caress is very much. I always preach caresses.

It's caress your wife. Don't. The soup is bad.

Give her a caress. The soup in the neck is bad. If you chatter, the soup doesn't become better.

But a caress makes it better. You know, everything. And caress your old mother.

How old mothers desire a caress from their children. And this murderer, in his last hours, he caressed his murderer on his head and said, You have not known what you have done. I forgive you wholeheartedly, and I love you, and I can assure you that all the others whom you have beaten, if they were Christians, have forgiven you.

And if we who are simply sinners can forgive and love like this, the more so Jesus, who is love incarnate. He wishes you. He wishes you to be saved much more than you wish to be saved.

He wishes you to be with him in heaven much more than you wish to be with him in heaven. He runs after you with his blessings. And somebody must be a very fast runner to run away from Jesus who runs after him.

He loves you. You only repent of what you have done and ask his forgiveness. And in that prison cell in which no privacy was possible, I overheard the murderer confessing his crime to the murderer.

To the murderer. The most thrilling novel is not as thrilling as reality. The murderer confessed to the murderer.

The murderer, before dying, gave absolution to his murderer. They embraced each other. They embraced each other.

Slowly, slowly, the pastor went back to his bed, and they died both on the same night. It was a Christmas Eve. What a joy it must have been in heaven.

The murderer and the murderer coming hand in hand. The same joy which must have been in heaven when Saint Paul came and met in heaven Stephen. He had participated in the murder of Stephen.

And now he came as an apostle. He came to heaven. Love has conquered every grudge, every resentment.

I care very little about communism. It's a very small thing. I don't give much importance to communism.

It's a small thing. A virus is also a small thing, but can kill a man, no? Many have told me, don't fight communism. It is small.

And I said, will you promise to me? I will promise. I will not fight communism if you give me in writing that if you will have a virus and a microbe, you will not go to the doctor and you will not fight it. Small things have also to be fought against.

But communism is a small thing. And capitalism is a small thing. Everything is small.

Love is great. God is love. Jesus is love.

And there are Christians in communist countries and who have passed through prisons who can be an example for us in the free world. That love can be practiced, even in the worst of circumstances, also in an unhappy marriage, and also in everywhere, in relationships with children, with everybody. And that love can conquer.

And that the one who wronged you and the one who suffered wrong can go to heaven hand in hand. You look being seated yourself in heavenly places and you see the men who lose their lives in squabbles and quarrels and such pity things. You are on this side of the world and I am on the other side of the world.

Everyone sees things otherwise. There can be one heart and one soul in the service of the Lord. Now, the Christian mission to the communist world for which I speak is very unhappy with me.

Because they are a mission which prints Bibles and needs money for Bibles. And they need money for broadcasting the Gospel. And they need money to help families of Christian martyrs.

And I speak about love and about Christ and forget to say about money. So I will not make them to be too sad. This church can serve us very much.

It is like taking a bath when you read about these martyrs. When you read a page about this church and about the sufferers and how their faces shine. It is like being rejuvenated yourself.

That is what the church can give you. They also need something from you. Bibles are very, very rare in communist countries.

In China it is considered that there exists one Bible for a thousand Christians. In Russia, Bibles are still torn in pieces. And one gets one Gospel, the other gets a few Psalms, the other gets I don't know what.

And then they barter it among themselves. In many communist countries, a Christian book is a rarity. You can provide this.

Me, the Bible, has made a happy man. And perhaps you also, it has made a happy man. Share this happiness with somebody else.

We broadcast the Gospel and then tonight you will go after this meeting and have a snack. And what will families of Christian martyrs eat? Is it not a shame? It is a shame that not one single denomination in Australia, neither the Catholic Church, nor the Anglican, nor the Baptist, nor the Pentecostal Union, nor the Adventist Union, nor the Mormon Union, not one of them has in its budget ten dollars a year for families of Christian martyrs. They have money for the communist guerrillas in Africa.

All right, that's what they believe. Let them give the money there. But nobody has thought there are individual churches who do.

And there are many individuals, bishops and Christians and preachers who help very great through us or through another organization. But the denominations, the leadership, there is not one, not one who should think, my children eat. What do families of Christian martyrs eat? Have I to plead for this? Have I to plead for this? I've seen children of Christian martyrs going hungry.

I've seen. And I finish by telling you, then we will have a question and answer session. I will finish just by telling me, by telling you when I came out from prison, I went to visit a family.

The husband was still in prison. He had remained. And I went to visit his wife.

She had some five or six small children. The oldest was perhaps 12 or 13. And I came there, there was nothing in the house, nothing.

And when I left, the oldest child came with me and beaming for joy, he said, brother, do you know what we all have plotted, all the children? Never to tell mommy that we are hungry because when we tell her that we are hungry, she weeps. And as often as she asks us, are you hungry? We say, forget about it, mother. We wish to play.

That mother should be happy. Our children harass us to give them more and more. And there are children who plot not to tell mommy we are hungry because we know mother does not have a piece of bread.

And really, they should have a piece of bread. That is what the Christian mission to the communist world tries to do in the measure in which you help her to do this. And I hope you will reply to this appeal.

But again, I say, that would be only half of what you should do. Tonight, you should open your heart to receive what the underground church has to give to you. An example of passionate love towards Christ, an example of self-sacrifice in his service, an example that life can be lived not in fighting each other and looking at things from so many perspectives, but being one soul and one heart seated in heavenly Jerusalem, the beautiful city for which we all wait, saved already now, having eternal life.

Like that pastor Kochanga, his face shown, I know, I knew what I become. I will never cease to serve the Lord. We have the truth.

Amen. For your ballpoint pens. I know every Australian has such a pen.

He never buys it. He borrows it from somebody and does not give it back. Take out your ballpoint pens.

And here you have a tear-up piece. Take out your hymn sheets now. Here you have a tear-up piece.

Right here, your name, address, and zip code. Take a moment for this. And put it also in the offering plate.

Then you will receive every month from us our newsletter in which we give the pictures of those who are in prison, their stories, their addresses. You will be able to pray intelligently for them. It is a real shame that Michael Schott is in jail since 43 years and we don't know yet his name.

If you give us his name and address, you will get freely every month this. And put in the offering plate also questions or give them to the ladies who go up and down. You give them your questions.

You can give them also the slips with your address. Thank you. Shall we just bow for a moment's prayer? Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, we thank thee that thou didst offer thyself to us and to all so that whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely.

Enable us, O God, we pray through the prayers of our hearts and the gifts of our hands to minister to those who are in difficulty, danger, distress. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

And I will try to reply as much as I can. I recently heard on TV Reverend Alan Walker from Sydney say he had just returned from Russia where he conducted the first ever evangelical mission. He also said Bibles are being printed in Russia and are readily available.

Could Pastor Bormann comment on this? I don't know this Reverend Walker. He had a mistake. He believed that he has been in Russia.

He has not been in Russia. He has not been in Russia. Many evangelists have said that they've been in Russia and have preached there.

They were mistaken. They have not been in Russia. If one is an evangelist, before being an evangelist, somebody is a Christian.

And a Christian, wherever he goes, he wishes to have fellowship with Christ. And Christ has given his address in Russia. He said, I was in jail.

Whosoever has not visited a Russian jail has not been in Russia. I went to South Africa. I was told there are no Christians in prison in South Africa, but there are communists in prison and they are badly treated.

And I said it is a shame that communists should be badly treated. And I went to that prison and I said I wish to see the communists who are in prison there, but in the absence of any guard, I wish to be alone with them and to be able to hear what they have to say. It's not possible.

I said, all right, you please ring up the premier and tell him that Pastor Bormann wishes to see the communists. And if you don't allow me to see the communists, that's also enough for me. I will go back to America and I will say that they are badly treated because if they are well treated, why would you hinder

me to see them? They rang up the premier.

In one minute, they had the permission to allow him to see the communists without anybody being present. Christ was in prison in South Africa, not only in the bodies of communists who suffer. He is together with everybody who suffers.

The more so with his brothers and sisters. Whosoever has done to me has done to one of my brothers and sisters. He said it in Matthew 25.

I know not of one single evangelist who has gone to prison there, with one exception. The former Archbishop of the Anglican Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Coburn. He, when he went to Russia, he took a television crew with him and the television, before the television crew, he asked, what is it with Pastor Vince? I've heard he's in prison.

He was the only one. So they have not been in Russia. They've seen a fake Russia.

They've delivered sermons there. I believe they've delivered sermons. I have heard Americans preaching in Romania.

I was in the church when they preached. I knew English and I knew Romanian. They preached a good sermon.

The translation was the praise of socialists. The communists are deceivers. The communists are deceivers.

How in the world would they allow an American to speak there against sin? If I go in a place of drug addiction, I have to speak about the sin of drug addiction. If I go among alcoholics, I have to speak about the sins of alcoholism. If I go in a communist country, where communism has killed 60 million innocents, I have to speak out against the crime of communism.

Will they allow such a thing? These are naïvetés. In the light of 1 Corinthians 10.13 and Matthew 10.33, how can God allow some to be tortured and brainwashed to a point where they deny him? It is as if some get to heaven easily, for example, here in Australia, and others in prison would have got there if not so severely tortured. Suicide seems a better option than to lose one's soul.

May the Lord give you wisdom to answer. So perhaps we wait with the answer until God gives the wisdom. It's surely a strange thing.

It's a very strange thing, but everything in the world is strange. We live in a very strange world, which we don't understand. It is strange that some are born in a free country, like Australia.

Some are born in a rich house. Some are born in a poor house. Some are born in a house with much education.

Some are born in some aboriginal hut. And some are millionaires and have an easy life. And they can be good Christians too.

And others have a very difficult life, a life of poverty. We don't understand. Why was one man so rich, we read in the parable of Jesus, and another was a beggar at his door? The only thing which I can reply, but I was a man who had a great privilege.

During years, I had nothing else to do than to meditate. There was not the slightest noise in that prison cell. Not the slightest noise.

I had no Bible. I had no books. I had nothing.

And I saw nothing. I heard nothing. And I could meditate.

And I asked God so many why's, until I got the reply, that to ask why is wrong. Not every question has an answer. Wrong questions can't have right answers.

If I would ask you a question, which two odd figures, if added to each other, give a third odd figure? You would say such a thing can't exist. The question is wrong. Two odd figures, if added to each other, can't give an odd figure.

They can give only an even figure. There exist wrong questions to which no right reply is possible. I believe that wherever you see suffering, the question why is wrong? Why is this suffering? Why is this inequality? The right question is, how should I handle the suffering? How should I bear it? How should I use it to the glory of God, to the good of my fellow man, and to the good of my own soul? Everything which happens in the world can be used for the good, and for the glory of God, for my own good, for the good of others.

Fortunes, or misfortunes, don't change man. They show only the character of that man. You can have a misfortune, it will not destroy you.

A misfortune can make your character to be more beautiful. So we don't ask the why, we ask how to handle best. And those who broke down under torture and under persecution were those who put many questions to God, why? There were others when they saw the persecution, they just jubilated and said, thank God that I have the occasion also to suffer for the holy cause, and they could bear it easier.

Comforting letters to prisoners in Russian camps. How can we be sure letters reach destination? Won't relatives suffer reprisal? Or prisoners suffer even more? There exists no assurance that letters would arrive. We always give in our newsletters addresses of Christians who are in prison and their stories and so on, and we encourage people to write.

Don't write politics. Don't write Bible verses. Write simply, we love you, we think about you, our heart goes out to you, something like this.

We hope you will have... They need only a token that somebody thinks about them. They can combine everything else, they can combine themselves. And there is one chance out of ten that such a letter will arrive.

There exists a heavy censorship in communist countries, but neither can they censor all the letters. Sometimes the censor is drunk and sometimes he's neglectful and sometimes he's sleepy. Some letters pass, we get sometimes replies.

We don't know one single case in which there should have been a reprisal against families as a result of such letters, or the contrary happens. We know that where much interest is shown, the fate of some Christians has been eased. How are Bibles brought into and distributed in communist countries? We will take this as the last question because I'm very tired.

How are Bibles brought in? I wonder who put the question. If there would be here an agent of the Soviet embassy in Kambiaraz, he would also put this question. Now I understand that somebody put it with very good intentions.

A smuggler who says how he smuggles is a very poor smuggler. Millions of pieces of Christian literature enter in communist countries. Millions of pieces.

And we can't say very much how they enter. Some things can be said because more or less they have been discovered. But they can't be hindered.

Russia and European satellite countries have had last year 7 million tourists. You can't check 7 million tourists. You can't check the tire of every car to see what is in the tire.

You can't open. You can't check every car to see if it doesn't have a double floor so that gospel should be hidden in between. Sometimes they would untighten the screws.

They would check thoroughly. They find nothing. They put everything back.

They apologize very much. They allow the car to pass. The gospels were not in the double floor of the car.

They were in the double roof of the car. And if they are not in the double roof, they are somewhere else. You can't check so many cars.

There are so many pregnant women among these 7 million tourists. Now, with what is a woman pregnant? It can be a womb full with gospels. And I said already yesterday that what Australian doctors and nurses say that a woman can be pregnant only once a year in the ninth month is not true.

In our mission, they are pregnant in the ninth month four or five times a year. They have every time a very happy delivery without the slightest pain. The Russians buy wheat.

I say only about things which they have discovered already. There are other things which they have not discovered. They have written books against us and articles in which they say they have discovered.

They buy wheat from Canada and from the United States. Now, one Christian operator at a grain elevator can make it that the ship should be half wheat and half gospels and so on. It's endlessly the possibilities.

And we use them all. As far as we can. We are also weak men and not always very skilled, but we do what we can.

And now you will excuse me for not replying all questions, but I'm very tired. And tomorrow I have two sermons and a flight to Sydney. Tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, a flight to New Zealand.

I'm very thankful that you have come. Those who can make it, I would invite them to come again tomorrow evening. You will be told very easy tomorrow evening.

Tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock in St. Paul's Presbyterian Church on St. Paul's Terrace. I hope you will be there tomorrow. And I will not tell you where I preach in the morning, because I believe in the morning every one of you should go to his own church.

At least somewhere in the morning. And I hope you come again. You will understand that on one evening you can't tell the story of the underground church.

Therefore, I would encourage you to take some books. I've written Tortured for Christ in God's Underground. If that were Christ, my wife has written the Apostle's Wife.

She has been in jail at the same time when I was in jail. But in another jail, I did not see her 14 years. She will be at the table with books.

And you will get information about what is happening with your brethren. The Bible says, feel the bonds of others as if you would be bound together with them. Did you ever feel the change like this? The Bible says, weep with those who weep.

When did you weep last? When did you say a joke last? When did you watch television last? The Bible does not say you should watch television. You might. The Bible does not oblige you to say jokes.

You might. But the Bible obliges you to weep. Why don't you weep? We don't weep.

It's a Christian obligation to weep. Not everyone has a lacrimal gland which secretes much, but it's the weeping of the heart, the mourning of the heart. How is it that you don't weep? You don't weep because you don't share, first of all, the passion of Christ.

And then the bonds of your brethren as if you would be bound together with them. In Romanian prisons, Christians have been sometimes bound 28 days. That is the maximum which I have seen.

28 days with their hands behind their back. That's all. They were not beaten.

28 days and nights with their hands behind your back. Do you know what the first thing which happens? You wish to scratch yourself. It itches.

And you can't scratch yourself. Do you know what a torture this is? Just try. Put a watch before you and say during one hour I will not move my hands from my back.

The first thing will be it will itch you. And don't scratch yourself. The nose runs.

Don't wipe it. We were given food but we had no hand free to handle a spoon. And the food was licked as dogs lick the food.

And there are so many other needs of the human body. You were never untied. And we are meant to feel the bonds of others.

As if we because there exists not they and we I and me and he and she such a thing does not exist. We are one soul. We are one heart.

And we are the one body of Jesus Christ. We are one. And if it if it aches me here the whole body feels the ache.

I thank you that you have given for this cause. You have shopped this week. You have spent for shopping.

Next week you will have to shop again. You have given for families of Christian martyrs. Next month they will be hungry again.

Think about them. Think about the needs of Gospels in communist countries. And keep your hearts always open.

If you wish to beautify your hearts there is no better means to beautify it than to enter into the depth of the suffering of Christ and of the suffering of martyrs. I have had one great advantage when I became a Christian. I am a Jew.

My wife is also Jewish. And when I became a Christian I had a great privilege to have very good teachers in Christianity. And they have taught me from the very first day.

Every day read a page of the Bible and the life of a martyr. That is what I have done from the first days that I became a Christian. And when my children were small they were brought up like this.

They knew the whole story of the martyrs from all the centuries. Every day.

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