

The Continuation Christophobia – The Undeclared War

Introduction:

1. ***(Act 4:1-2 ESV) And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.***
2. So the teaching of resurrection in the temple was a threat to the Sadducees
3. ***Act 4:3 “And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening”***

The World:

1. Reports from all over the world of Christian being killed
2. The narrative of the persecuted speaks of amazing courage

What is Christophobia?:

1. Simply put it is the persecution of Christ followers
2. According to the United States State Department, Christians in over 60 countries face the realities of massacre, rape, torture, mutilation, family division, harassment, imprisonment, slavery, discrimination in education and employment, and even death.

Persecution of Christians new?:

1. It can be traced to Christianity’s beginnings – Christ Himself was martyred
2. Jesus said: ***“No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also” (John 15:20).***
3. How should we be reacting to the persecution in other countries?
4. Should Christians be speaking to speak to the power structures?
5. We can urge adherence to agreements, such as the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights which guarantees the right to religious freedom.

Interesting Times:

1. While the Pope seems to spare no occasion to castigate Western societies for allegedly not doing enough to welcome and accommodate Islamic refugees from the Middle East, he rarely says anything about the epidemic of anti-Christian persecution
2. Christianity is the most persecuted religion in the world
3. In 2016 over 900,000 Christians suffered persecution
4. The majority of victims are prey to Islamic predators
5. Persecution is defined as: ***“Christian persecution is any hostility experienced from the world as a result of one’s identification as a Christian. “***
6. On a monthly basis, 322 Christians are murdered.
7. 772 acts of violence—from rapes to beatings; from abductions to arrests and forced marriages—are visited upon them.
8. Each month, 214 churches and Christian properties are destroyed.
9. Of the 50 most oppressive countries for Christians, 80% are Islamic.
10. And yet there is a portion of our society who cry crocodile tears over “Islamophobia,”
11. Muslims are the least persecuted religious group in the world – especially in the West

Facts of the Persecuted Church:

1. 2016 is the worst year for Christian persecution – 90,000 killed for their faith
2. Islamic extremism remains the dominant driver – in 35 out of 50 nations

3. *"Islamic oppression remains the most common cause of pressure against Christians,"*
4. Not a single Christian church left in Afghanistan
5. In Mosul there are only 20-30 Christians left
6. In North Korea out 25 million plus only 300,000 Christians

Christianity in China Today:

1. Up to 200,000 million Christians today
2. Since Xi Jinping – increase in persecution
 - a. Cross Demolition *"Three Rectifications and One Demolition"* !500 crosses removed
 - b. Repression of state-sanctioned churches and leaders
 - c. Large scale imprisonment for sects like Eastern Light
 - d. Christmas crackdown
 - e. Increased crackdown
3. Stories Alan Yuan / George Chen / Ruth
4. ***Philippians 1:29, which states, "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him."***
5. ***Philippians 1:27-30, which says in part: "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ ..."***

Where do we begin?:

1. We need a reality check – discrimination in many Muslim countries is codified
2. Apostasy in Muslim countries is a crime
3. Number of Mosques – number of churches in Saudi Arabia

Nasty Christophobia:

1. The USA is less friendly to Christians - same standards do not apply to Islam
2. The majority of terror attacks are by radical Islamic terrorists
3. John Adam said *"Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people," said "It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."*
4. Contrary to what is said today the majority of the Founding Fathers were not secularists
5. First Amendment says *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."*
6. Declaration of Independence says *"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."*
7. We must boldly stand against any who attempt to degrade our Christian heritage

Conclusion:

1. How do we support those who are being persecuted?
 - a. Remember them and empathize with them (***Hebrews 13:3***)
 - b. Pray for them (***! Samuel 12:23***)
 - c. Stand up for them and yourselves
 - d. Go to them (***Acts 16:9***)
 - e. Contribute financially (***2 Corinthians 9:6***)
2. The martyr missionary Jim Elliott said: *"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."*