

Missions: An Adventure In Faith

STUDY NO: 7

TOPIC: John – The Persecuted Church

BIBLE PASSAGES: Matthew 10:16-42, John 15:18-25, 16:1-4, 17:14; Revelation 1-3, 6:9-11, Romans 8:35-39,

HOW TO STUDY THIS LESSON:

Open in prayer asking God for truth and wisdom from His Word.

Read the Bible passage

Answer the questions, writing the answers in the space provided.

Take about 3-5 minutes per question.

Fill in the "Personal Application" section

If you have time write down prayer points for members of the group.

Close in prayer.

John was the apostle to the underground church. After his brother James was beheaded by Herod and his friend Peter is imprisoned, John went underground (as the Jews wanted to kill him as one of the "big three" apostles closest to Jesus). After the early chapters of Acts John "disappears" from the record and is not mentioned even in the greetings in the epistles. There is a 60 year silence until he writes the gospel of John, the Johannine epistles and Revelation. Even then he is cautious saying things such as: 2 John 1:12 Having many things to write to you, I do not want to say with paper and ink. But I trust to come to you and speak face to face". In Revelation we find John imprisoned on the isle of Patmos for his faith and his writings are full of references to persecution. Even today many Christians are being persecuted for their faith – it is estimated that around 200,000 Christians are martyred very year for their faith –mainly in Muslim and Communist countries. Countries that engage in vigorous religious persecution of Christians include North Korea, China, Sudan, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What do you think Jesus meant when He said: (Matthew 10:16) Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves.
2. Read John 15:18-25, 16:1-4, 17:14 - What are some of the reasons that Christians are "hated by the world" and persecuted?
3. Missionaries to countries where the church is persecuted have to very careful. What are some precautions you think they should observe?
4. Read Matthew 10:16-42 – What are some of the things that Jesus said would happen to his first missionaries?
5. What attitudes were they to have in the face of persecution? (Matt 10:16,19, 22, 26,28 32,33, 37, 38)
6. What promises does Jesus give to persecuted missionaries? (Matthew 10: 19,20, 29-31, 32, 33, 39)

7. What does Jesus promise those who give help to such workers - despite the danger? (Matt 10:40-42)

8. What are some of God's promises to persecuted Christians? (Revelation 2:7,10,11, 17, 26,27; 3:5, 3:8-12, 20,21)

9. What happens to those, in the last days, who abandon the faith because of persecution? (Rev 14:9-11)

10. Read Romans 8:35-39 - How does this apply to the persecuted Church?

11. Is God going to let His Church be persecuted forever? (Revelation 6:9-11)

12. How can we support missionaries that work to establish the Church amidst persecution?

PERSONAL APPLICATION – a command to obey, a warning to heed, a promise to claim, a deed to do, an attitude to change....

PRAYER POINTS – Use "Operation World" by Patrick Johnstone to pray for: **Vietnam**