

FOCUS

Biblical Worldview

TITLE

Ambassadors in Chains

REFERENCE

Ephesians 6:19,20

• brown merit •

Ephesians

...LESSON 4

• FOR THE LEADER

• PREP



FOR THE LEADER

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT:

In many locations throughout our world, Christians are imprisoned, beaten, and even killed for their faith. We have a responsibility to fight for them in prayer, asking God to give them strength in their persecution.

THINK ABOUT IT:

- Does persecution of the church still exist today?
- What is our responsibility as men of God to Christians around the world facing persecution for their faith?



PREP

None

• Notes •

- The following are answers to the puzzle at the end of the lesson.

Across:

1. John
5. Matthias
6. Simon
7. Stephen
10. Luke
11. James

Down:

1. James
2. Thomas
3. Matthew
4. Paul
8. Andrew
9. Peter

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Ephesians

... LESSON 4

· READ



· REFLECT



· RESPOND



READ

Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.
Ephesians 6:19,20

What sacrifices have you made because of your faith in Jesus Christ? Have you encountered opposition for reading or carrying your Bible? On August 5, 2008, eight high school students from a small African country were imprisoned in a metal shipping container after they objected to authorities confiscating and burning 1,500 Bibles. That same month, in a prominent Middle Eastern country, a young woman had her tongue cut out and she was then burned to death by her own father because of her conversion to Christianity.

These are just a couple of countless stories from around the globe about the persecution Christians face today. While we regularly enjoy the freedom to worship God openly without fear of death or imprisonment, millions of our brothers and sisters through the world face unimaginable persecution for their faith.

This type of treatment is nothing new to the followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus himself warned His followers that they would face persecution

for following Him, even going so far to say that “Men will hate you because of me.” (Matthew 10:22) Throughout church history, Christians have been imprisoned, beaten, stoned, thrown to the lions, burned at the stake, and much more because of their faith in Jesus. And in the verses you read earlier, Paul referred to his chains, or imprisonment, because of the gospel.

Can you recall any other individuals from the Bible or history who faced opposition because of their faith?

As men of God, we have a responsibility to our fellow believers around the world who regularly face persecution because of their faith. We need to support them in any way possible. In Ephesians and throughout his writings, Paul asked the believers to pray for him that he would have boldness to continue to preach the gospel even while he was locked in chains.

Prayer is a very powerful weapon in your arsenal. With prayer, a man of God can literally be a part of delivering strength, speaking encouragement, and doing battle all without leaving his room. Through prayer, you can stand beside a missionary as he preaches to the people of South America. Through prayer, you can be part of delivering peace to the Asian pastor locked in prison because of his faith.

How is that possible? It's possible because your prayers have direct access to God. The most

effective strategy to combat persecution of God’s Church is prayer. Your brothers and sisters in Christ need you!

PRAYER: God, I pray for the Christians around the world facing opposition and persecution because of their faith. Please give them boldness and strength to preach the truth and proclaim their faith. Protect them from those who would destroy Your Church. I also pray for the missionaries and their families who are fighting on the front lines, proclaiming the gospel. Please equip them to face whatever challenges come their way. Help me to take seriously my duty to pray for my fellow Christians around the world. In Jesus’ name. Amen.



REFLECT

Complete the crossword on the next page about the first martyrs of the Church.

For help, look at *Jesus Freaks* by dc Talk and The Voice of the Martyrs.



RESPOND

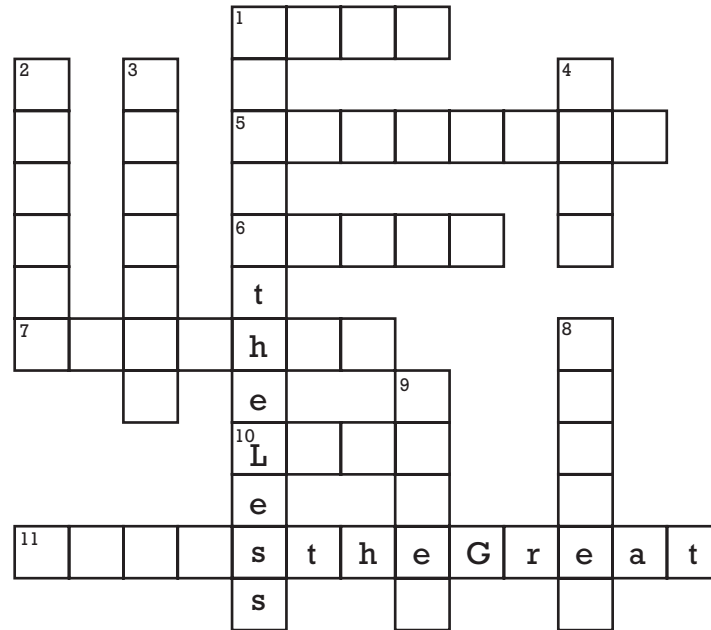
Learn and say Ephesians 6:19,20 for a parent, guardian, or group leader.

7-DAY Sunday ·
BIBLE Monday ·
READING Tuesday ·
PLAN Wednesday ·
Thursday ·
Friday ·
Saturday ·

The *Fire Bible: Student Edition* provides a reading plan that follows a two-year design for reading the entire Bible. Follow that reading plan in order to earn the green Bible Reading merit.

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EARLY MARTYRS



ACROSS

1. He survived an execution attempt and was exiled to the island of Patmos.
5. He replaced Judas and was stoned and beheaded.
6. He was known as “the Zealot” and crucified.
7. He was the first Christian martyr.
10. This doctor and author of Acts was hanged.
11. He was John’s older brother and was beheaded.

DOWN

1. This leader of the Jerusalem church was killed by having rocks thrown at him.
2. Doubting no more, this disciple was killed by a spear.
3. This former tax collector was beheaded.
4. This apostle was beheaded by order of Emperor Nero.
8. The brother of Peter was crucified on an X-shaped cross.
9. He requested to be crucified upside down because he didn’t feel worthy to die like Jesus.

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