

Missions Sunday

A Biblical View of Martyrdom

Grace Fellowship Church / Dave Wernz / July 28, 2024

I. Internal Shifts for Embracing Martyrdom

A. Rejecting the Satanic Lie of Immortality

Matthew 16:24-26 “Then Jesus told His disciples, ‘If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?’”

- a. The very first lie in the garden was, “...You will not surely die” (**Genesis 3:4**)
- b. Satan tries to tempt Jesus away from obedience to the cross (**Matthew 4:1-11**)
- c. Jesus reacts strongly to Peter’s saying that Jesus’s death wouldn’t happen. (**Matthew 16:23**)

Following Jesus involves a cross; all believers will face death.

If you knew for certain that your decision to follow Jesus would eventually result in painful, humiliating torture and death - would anything change for you?

Ways to practically move toward losing our lives

1. Assume that our decision to follow Jesus will eventually lead us to suffering - and that some of that suffering will likely be physical. **1 Peter 3:13-17**
2. Assume the daily inconveniences and hardships are preparing you to endure physical death for His sake

B. Committing to Fruitfulness Over Productivity

John 12:24-26 “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.”

Death is essentially the end of productivity - but it is the necessary beginning for fruitfulness.

Advantages of a Fruitfulness Mindset

- 1. Patience in Process**

- Understanding the time between planting and harvesting. The time in-between is part of the plan and not a problem to be fixed

2. Celebration and Thanksgiving

- Recognizing God's work in all seasons.

3. Endurance when loving someone goes badly

- Continuing to love even when it costs more than expected.

II. Learning to be Helpful

A. Encouragement as a Discipline

- *Commit to sending one email a month to missionaries.*
- *Join the Missionary Encouragement Team*

B. Prayer as a Discipline

- *Join a Creative Access Prayer Team for South East Asia or Central Asia.*
- *Read Paul Miller's "A Praying Church"*

Want to learn more about Missions and Getting Involved? Scan the QR Code!



graceky.org/get-involved-with-missions

Romans 8:31-39 “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’ ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Other Helpful Resources to Learn about the Persecuted Church

- *Read “The Insanity of Obedience” by Nik Ripken*
- *Visit OpenDoorsUS.org*