



The Persecuted Church

MAIN IDEAS

- Jesus foretold that His church would be hated and persecuted.
- The church should remember, pray for, comfort, and sometimes rescue those who are persecuted.
- Jesus will uphold His church through persecution.

MEMORY WORK

Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.—Hebrews 13:3

SCRIPTURE FOR THE LESSON

1) John 15:18-20a
2) Acts 8:1-3

3) Hebrews 13:3
4) Acts 12:5

5) 2 Corinthians 1:3-4a
6) 2 Corinthians 11:32-33

AS YOU WALK BY THE WAY

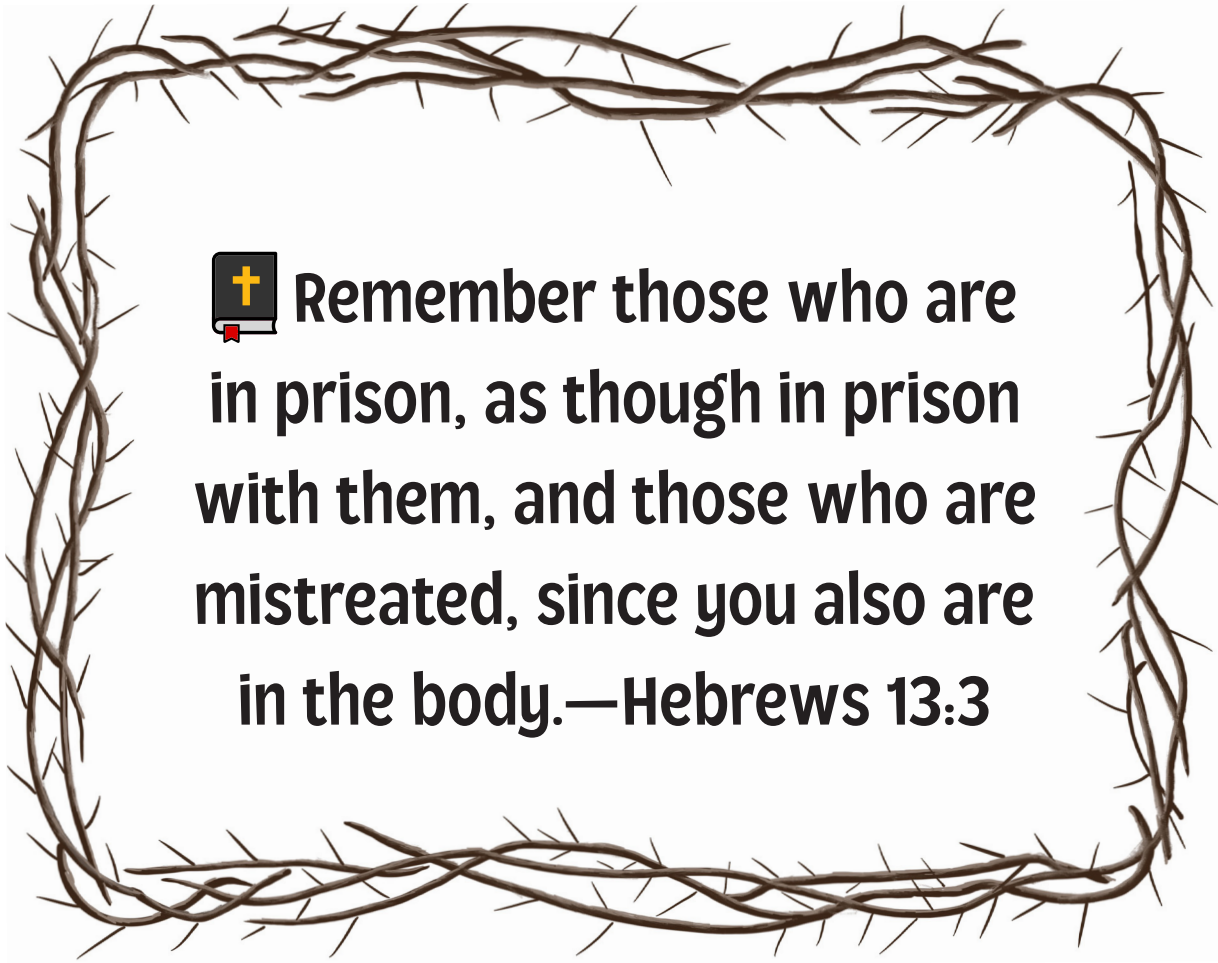
Read the verses listed above and talk about the various ways that people suffer for being Christians. Point out that, in some countries, it is even “illegal” to be a Christian, have a Bible, tell another person about Jesus, or gather together with other Christians. In some of these places, people take away Christians’ jobs and homes, or even throw them into prison. In some places, Christians are killed for their faith in Jesus. Ask: *How can we remember and pray for these Christians? Are there any ways in which we could comfort them? How might the church be able to actually rescue some of them?*


Recall Acts 8:1-3 where we are told of Saul persecuting Christians in Jerusalem. Ask: *Do you remember what eventually happened to Saul?* [Jesus saved him, and he became Paul, one of the apostles.] Paul went on to spread the gospel and start new churches in places far beyond Jerusalem. For doing this, Paul was hated and persecuted. The persecutor had now become the persecuted, and the church grew and spread because of it. Ask: *What can we learn by this example? Should we also pray that those who are presently persecuting Christians become saved?*

Ask: *How might persecution serve to make the church stronger? How does suffering serve to help us focus on what is most important in life? How can this strengthen us?* Read and talk about 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 or 1 Peter 1:6-7.

ACTIVITY

With your parents’ help, learn more about the persecuted church in a specific country. Helpful websites include: persecution.com (Voice of the Martyrs), joshuaproject.net, and opendoors.org. Then write about what you learn and how you can pray for the church.



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- Name of the country: _____
- Some interesting things this country is known for: _____

- About how many people live there? _____
- About how many Christians live there? _____
- In what ways are Christians being persecuted? _____

- This week I will pray for... _____
