

Prayer Points for the Persecuted Church

These prayer points are for churches, small groups and individuals who want to pray for persecuted Christians around the world: believers who are threatened, jailed, beaten, disowned or pushed out of work because they follow Jesus. They cover remembering them, courage and faithfulness, prisoners and families, persecutors and the spread of the gospel, and what God may be asking of us.

Remember those in prison as if you were bound with them, and those who are mistreated as if you were suffering with them.

Hebrews 13:3 (BSB)

Pray one section at a time and give each point a minute. Read the verse aloud first, then pray the short prayer, then add the names of countries, ministries or believers you know about from trusted sources. On the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, a group can pray straight through all five sections. Verses are from the Berean Standard Bible.

Remembering our brothers and sisters

1 One body, suffering together

Father, when one part of Christ's body suffers, every part suffers with it. Make our hearts ache and our prayers rise for brothers and sisters we have never met, who are beaten, jailed or shut out for following Jesus.

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

1 Corinthians 12:26 (BSB)

2 Thanks for their faithful witness

Lord, thank You that the word of God cannot be chained. Thank You for believers who keep worshipping in secret, in prison and in exile. Their faithfulness humbles us and strengthens our own faith.

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David, as proclaimed by my gospel, for which I suffer to the extent of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained!

2 Timothy 2:8-9 (BSB)

3 Peace from the One who overcame

Lord Jesus, You told us plainly that in the world we will have tribulation. Give persecuted believers Your peace in the middle of it, and the courage that comes from knowing You have overcome the world.

I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take courage; I have overcome the world!"

John 16:33 (BSB)

Courage and faithfulness

4 Boldness to speak God's word

Lord, consider the threats made against Your people, and enable Your servants to speak Your word with complete boldness. Answer for the church under pressure today the prayer the first believers prayed.

And now, Lord, consider their threats, and enable Your servants to speak Your word with complete boldness, as You stretch out Your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of Your holy servant Jesus."

Acts 4:29-30 (BSB)

5 Words before police and judges

Father, when believers are handed over to police, courts or their own relatives, keep them from panic. Give them what to say in that hour, and let Your Spirit speak through them.

But when they hand you over, do not worry about how to respond or what to say. In that hour you will be given what to say. For it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Matthew 10:19-20 (BSB)

6 Faithful even to death

Lord Jesus, You told the church in Smyrna not to fear what they were about to suffer. Strengthen those who face death for Your name to stay faithful to the end, and keep the crown of life before their eyes.

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison to test you, and you will suffer tribulation for ten days. Be faithful even unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 2:10 (BSB)

7 Blessing when insulted for Christ

Holy Spirit, Spirit of glory, rest on believers who are insulted for the name of Christ. When they are mocked, beaten or shamed, let them know they are blessed, and give them a joy their persecutors cannot explain.

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

1 Peter 4:14 (BSB)

Prisoners, families and the displaced

8 Believers in prison

God, while Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently for him. We pray that way now for believers imprisoned for their faith. Strengthen them in their cells, protect them from abuse, and open the doors in Your time.

So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was fervently praying to God for him.

Acts 12:5 (BSB)

9 The abducted and the condemned

Lord, may the groans of the captives reach You. We pray for Christians abducted by armed groups and for those sentenced to death because of their faith. By the strength of Your arm, preserve their lives and bring them home.

May the groans of the captives reach You; by the strength of Your arm preserve those condemned to death.

Psalms 79:11 (BSB)

10 Families of those killed for their faith

God, Father of the fatherless and defender of widows, care for families whose husbands, wives and parents were killed for following Jesus. Provide for them through Your church, and let the children grow up knowing You.

A father of the fatherless and a defender of widows is God in His holy habitation.

Psalms 68:5 (BSB)

11 New believers rejected by their families

Lord, when father and mother forsake them, receive them. Hold close new believers who have been disowned, thrown out of home or threatened by relatives because they turned to Jesus, and give them a family in Your church.

Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.

Psalms 27:10 (BSB)

12 Those who lost homes and work

Father, some of our brothers and sisters have lost homes, land and jobs because they belong to Christ. Meet their daily needs, and help them hold on to the better and permanent possession no one can take from them.

You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, knowing that you yourselves had a better and permanent possession.

Hebrews 10:34 (BSB)

Persecutors and the spread of the gospel

13 Love for those who persecute

Lord Jesus, You told us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. We pray for the officials, mobs and militants who harm Your people. Stop their violence, and give believers grace to love them.

But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Matthew 5:44-45 (BSB)

14 Grace to forgive

Lord, as Stephen was being stoned, he asked You not to hold this sin against those who killed him. Give believers who are wronged the grace to forgive, and guard their hearts from bitterness and revenge.

Falling on his knees, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Acts 7:60 (BSB)

15 Persecutors turned to Christ

Father, Paul was once a persecutor and a violent man, and You showed him mercy. Do it again: meet today's persecutors with the truth of Jesus, and turn them into brothers who preach the faith they tried to destroy.

I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man; yet because I had acted in ignorance and unbelief, I was shown mercy.

1 Timothy 1:13 (BSB)

16 The gospel carried further

Lord, when the first believers were scattered by persecution, they preached the word wherever they went. Use every hardship Your people suffer to carry the gospel further, and let many come to Christ through their witness.

Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

Acts 8:4 (BSB)

Our part

17 Not forgetting them

Lord, Paul asked the church to remember his chains. Keep the persecuted church from slipping out of our minds. Make us faithful intercessors, not just one Sunday a year, but week after week.

This greeting is in my own hand—Paul. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Colossians 4:18 (BSB)

18 Practical help for the family of faith

Father, as we have opportunity, help us do good to everyone, and especially to the family of faith. Show our church how to give, speak up and stand with believers under persecution through trustworthy ministries.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to the family of faith.

Galatians 6:10 (BSB)

Standing firm together

God of all grace, our brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. Keep them and us standing firm in the faith, and after they have suffered a little while, restore, secure, strengthen and establish them.

Resist him, standing firm in your faith and in the knowledge that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore you, secure you, strengthen you, and establish you.

1 Peter 5:9-10 (BSB)

A closing prayer

Lord Jesus, You were despised and rejected, and You know the suffering of Your people. Strengthen our brothers and sisters who are persecuted for Your name. Give them courage, provision and joy. Comfort those who grieve, free those in prison, and protect the vulnerable. Turn persecutors to Yourself, and let Your word run freely. Keep us from forgetting them. We pray as one body, in Your name. Amen.