

Detained and Interrogated: In ISIS' Backyard

We were just miles from what was ISIS-controlled territory and had paused in a border region. Suddenly, I found myself detained, along with several of the local pastors who were with me. As the Muslim soldier pointed his rifle toward me, he demanded my cellphone and began to inspect what contents I had on it. Standing there on the side of the road, in about 120 degree heat, it seemed like our plans were about to take a serious detour.

I had been in this nation, preaching the gospel, all week, and we had been holding a powerful open-air crusade in the local soccer stadium. The people had been pouring into the stadium and God had moved so powerfully. Scores of people were being delivered from severe demonization each day. Many were being healed each night by the power of God, and many more were bowing their knees to Jesus Christ and confessing Him as Lord. The cross of Christ was being embraced in a region that had rarely seen the gospel preached in demonstration and power.

One thing was sure, the forces of darkness were not pleased; and they were now attempting to shut it down. This was an attempt by the devil to stop the advancing of the kingdom.

Suddenly the soldier issued another command and briskly brought us into a building and placed us in front of a large figure, who was clearly the commander.

Immediately he confiscated our passports and began to interrogate me. They wanted to know if I was CIA and why I was in their nation. Over and over they grilled me while thumbing through my passport.

He looked at me again and said, "Why are you here?"

Suddenly, I felt the Holy Spirit whisper to me that He had all of this under control. I looked at the commander and answered him, "I am here to preach the gospel, to help your people and pray for the sick."

I knew this was no time to hide my intentions, and I was prepared to suffer for the sake of the Lord if necessary. In that moment, I was not worried for myself nor even for my wife, who was back in the United States 8 months pregnant with our son. The concern that was heavy on my heart was that I would be unable to continue the assignment I had been sent there to accomplish. I did not want the crusade to be brought to an end. Souls were hanging in the balance and I needed to get back out to the crusade field later that night.

I sat there and looked at the commander in front of me as he flipped through my passport. He then stared back at me, took a deep sigh and said, "You may go, but under two conditions. Condition No. 1, you must delete any photographs off of your phone and condition No. 2, you must agree to pray for me."

It was right there in the middle of that room that God turned what Satan had intended for evil into an opportunity to minister to the very commander of those Muslim soldiers.

I prayed for that man and his family right in that very room, and we continued the crusade that week unhindered.

Let me encourage you with this last word. The safest place you can be is in the will of God. It is more dangerous to be at a picnic out of the will of God than it would be to be in the most dangerous nation on this planet, as long as you walk in the will of God.

Know this: Whatever opposition Satan throws at you, if you are in the will of God, He will force those very attacks to work in your favor. Nothing and no one will thwart the plan of God. The Lord is about to turn it around! {eoa}

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