

American Christians Unprepared for Persecution

For Christians in many places around the world, following Christ is costly. The decision to put one's trust in Christ is a decision to embrace adversity and hostility.

"In profoundly persecuted places, the activities of our faith are so strongly opposed that to follow Christ, you have opted in for all of that difficulty," said Cole Richards, president of The Voice of the Martyrs.

According to Richards, Christians in the United States and in other free countries are less familiar with this mindset. "There is a dangerous notion that is actually taught very broadly in the U.S. across all denominations...it is this notion that if we go out and proclaim the gospel and witness for Christ in a winsome manner, and we bless our communities, then they will love us," Richards said.

"It's not real in practice here or anywhere in the world. What is really true...[is] if you are a faithful witness for Christ, you are bringing the Good News, but that Good News will be *rejected* by fallen mankind."

For this reason, Richards has described Christians in the U.S. as "unprepared" to face persecution. "We are unprepared unless we are ready to face opposition and rejection and really to bear shame," he added.

One of the ways American Christians can prepare is by knowing the stories of Christians who have already faced persecution, and endured it with faithfulness and courage.

The Voice of the Martyrs serves persecuted Christians in some of the most difficult and dangerous places to follow Christ, and works to unite the global body of Christ in a deeper

fellowship with one another.

Toward that end, VOM creates resources to inspire Christians in both free and restricted nations to a greater commitment to Christ and his Great Commission, no matter the cost. One such resource is the newly-released *Sabina Group Study*, a six-week study based on the film *Sabina* and inspired by the lives of Richard and Sabina Wurmbbrand, founders of The Voice of the Martyrs.

✖ The *Sabina Group Study* also features the testimonies of “modern-day Sabinas” who have experienced immense suffering for their decisions to follow Christ but have exemplified the same enduring faithfulness and joy that Richard and Sabina modeled. Study participants will be inspired by examples of the exemplary faith of women like Gracia Burnham, Susanna Koh, Maryam Rostampour and Marziyeh Amirizadeh. Each study session, and extensive online extras, will encourage viewers to grow in Christian maturity and prepare to be a bold witness at any cost.

“By experiencing these powerful examples...we will be inspired to go and do likewise,” Richards said. “Ultimately that means we will arrive in heaven, in eternity, with all these other faithful saints from all of church history and from around the world today and we will have in common with them that we held Christ to be worthy.”

The *Sabina Group Study* is available now from The Voice of the Martyrs.

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