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## Crete - Are you willing to live for Christ?

Matthew 5:10-12

Christianity conquered the pagan Roman Empire in less than 300 years. Paul wrote 3 letters called the pastoral epistles – 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

## Paul was on the island of Crete twice...

1) *As a prisoner on his way to Rome for trial, Acts 27*

After 2 years in prison, Julius, a Roman centurion is to transport Paul to Rome, which included a stop at Crete.

Through clues in Timothy and Titus, we can piece together a trail of the places that Paul visited before his second Roman imprisonment.

*\*TheBibleJourney.com*

2) *After his release from prison (62 AD), Paul visited:*

### Crete

*"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest sent in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (pastors) in every city."*

**Titus 1:5**

### Miletus

*"Trophimus, have I left at Miletus sick."*

**2 Timothy 4:20**

Evidence that the temporary sign gifts were passing out of use as predicted in I Corinthians 13:8, Mark 16:17-20.

### ***Paul had 3 coworkers that he did NOT heal...***

- Epaphroditus, Philippians 2:25-30
- Timothy, I Timothy 5:23
- Trophimus, 2 Timothy 4:20

### ***Ephesus and Macedonia***

*“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia....”*

**I Timothy 1:3**

### ***Troas***

*“The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments [Scripture].”*

**2 Timothy 4:13**

### ***Nicopolis***

*“When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.”*

**Titus 3:12**

### ***Back to Roman Prison – Mamertine Prison***

Emperor Nero began a horrific persecution in 67 AD that led to the death of Peter and Paul.

As Christians, for the most part, we live happier, healthier, and longer lives than non-Christians. Our marriages are stronger; our friendships are deeper. And we have a peace and joy from the Lord that words can't even describe. But there is another side of our Christian life... Persecution.

### ***In 2022...***

- Over **360 million** Christians live in 60 countries with high levels of persecution and discrimination.
- \_\_\_\_\_ – Christians were killed for their faith.
- **5,110** – churches and other Christian buildings attacked.
- **4,765** – believers imprisoned without trial or arrest.
- **3,829** – the number of Christians abducted for their faith.

*\*OpenDoorsUSA.org/Christian-persecution*

# 1. What did Jesus Teach about Persecution?

A. *Jesus predicted His Followers would be Persecuted, v. 10*

*"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

**Matthew 5:10**

*"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."*

**John 15:20**

B. *Jesus Promised Great \_\_\_\_\_ for the Persecuted*

*"Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."*

**Luke 6:23**

C. *Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ is with the Persecuted*

Jesus said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."  
**Matthew 28:20**

*"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."*

**Isaiah 43:2**

Expect Persecution. Do not Fear Persecution.  
Persecution is temporary; heaven is forever.  
God will manifest His presence during the Persecution.

*"Yea, all that will live godly shall suffer persecution."*

**2 Timothy 3:12**

When Paul left Titus on Crete, he had a lot of work to do. The Christians on Crete were new baby Christians struggling with selfishness, worldliness, and false teachings. But Titus and the faithful pastors did an outstanding job in building strong Christians that passed on the faith to generations to come.

200 years later when the Governor of Crete carried out the decree, ten faithful pastors refused to bow to the idol. The governor ordered them to be cruelly tortured for 30 days. They were all given a second chance to recant their faith in Christ. Not one turned their back on Christ. The governor ordered them to be beheaded.

Other than Titus, Paul's son in the faith, none are more honored even today than those 10 pastors – Theodulus, Saturninus, Euporus, Gelasius, Eunician, Zoticus, Pompilus, Agathopus, Basilides, and Evaristus.

## 2. Why do People persecute Christians?

A. They are motivated by the \_\_\_\_\_ host

*“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”*

**1 Peter 5:8**

There is a spiritual war going on in the world between the forces of light and darkness, between God and Satan.

B. They mistakenly think they are serving God,  
*1 Timothy 1:13*

C. They know they are guilty, and so they lash out at others to feel better about themselves

## 3. As Christians, How Do We Respond to Persecution?

A. \_\_\_\_\_ for those who persecute us

*“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”*

**Matthew 5:44**

B. Be Bold and Not \_\_\_\_\_

*“And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.”*

**Philippians 1:14**

Because Paul is sharing his faith in prison, others take courage to share their faith outside of prison.

C. Ask God to \_\_\_\_\_ you Stay Faithful,  
*James 1:12*

If living out your faith is not costing you something, then maybe you're not doing it the right way.

Are you willing to live for Christ... no matter what the cost? Today, none of us will be called upon to die for Christ. But are we willing to do the basics – faithful to the Word of God, prayer, church, giving, witnessing?

If you only practice your faith and obedience when it is convenient, your faith may be weak. If you've never received Christ as your Savior, turn to Him today. Are you willing to \_\_\_\_\_ your life to save it?