

SOLITARY REFINEMENT

Discussion Group #1

READ

"Communists had taken over Romania and they convened a congress of all Christian bodies. There were four thousand priests, pastors, and ministers of all denominations.... These men of God chose Josef Stalin as honorary president of this congress. One after another, bishops and pastors arose and declared that communism and Christianity are fundamentally the same and could coexist. One minister after another praised communism and assured the new government of the loyalty of the church. My wife and I were present at this congress. Sabina told me, 'Richard, stand up and wash away this shame from the face of Christ! They are spitting in His face.' I said to her, 'If I do so, you lose your husband.' She replied, 'I don't wish to have a coward as a husband.'"

(Richard Wurmbrand in *Tortured for Christ*, pg. 14)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Sabina felt that her husband Richard would have been a coward if he had remained silent. Do you agree? Why or why not?

You might face times when people will oppose you because of your faith, or pressure you to compromise your commitment to Christ. What do you think that might look like? What promises from Scripture can you think of that would help you?

Some Biblical examples of those who spoke up are: The Lord Jesus at the temple (John 2:13-17); Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40); Paul in Athens (Acts 17:16-31). Can you think of others? Can you think of any modern-day examples?

SOLITARY REFINEMENT

Discussion Group #2

READ

"There is only one method of resistance to brainwashing: it is 'heartwashing.' If your heart is cleansed by the love of Jesus, and if your heart loves Him, one can resist any torture."

Rev. Richard Wurmbrand tells the story of his imprisonment in his book, *Tortured for Christ*. He endured hours of brainwashing and mind-breaking techniques, including the use of a recorded voice that repeated days on end: "Communism is good. Christianity is stupid. Give up." He was also told over and over, "Nobody loves you."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Do you understand what Richard Wurmbrand meant by "heartwashing?" What do you think that means - not just in asking Jesus to come into your heart, but in everyday life?

You've probably been told that knowing Christ is worth any sacrifice. That sounds ominous. You've also heard that there is great joy in serving Jesus; in fact, Richard said that he discovered unimaginable joy. Why do you think Richard found joy in prison?

The drama is called "Solitary Refinement." Do you know why it's called that? How was Richard Wurmbrand "refined" by his time in solitary confinement?

SOLITARY REFINEMENT

Discussion Group #3

READ

“What is hard to comprehend in the midst of suffering is not the misfortune itself, or even the pain or injustice of it. The real sting of suffering is the apparent ‘God-forsakenness’ of it. We cry out, yet it appears that God does not seem to care. The silence of heaven haunts us when God seems either unable or unwilling to do anything about our afflictions.

“What is the solution? What did Bonhoeffer mean when he said, ‘Only the suffering God can help’? Is it possible that part of our solution to the questions of suffering and persecution lies in seeing God as a God who suffers too? ...God suffers because He chooses to love.”¹

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What good or bad responses have you seen when someone is crying? What about God; does He cry? According to these passages, how does God respond when His people are suffering?

- “In all their affliction He was afflicted” (Isaiah 63:9).
- “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4).

Sometimes it seems as if God is silent. How does that fit into His promise that He will never leave us?

In Philippians 1:29, Paul says that it is a privilege to believe in Christ and a privilege to suffer for Him. Suffering doesn't seem like much of a privilege. Can you think of any reasons why Paul had said this?

¹ Glenn M. Penner. *In the Shadow of the Cross, A Biblical Theology of Persecution and Discipleship*. Living Sacrifice Books. Bartlesville. Pg. 87.

SOLITARY REFINEMENT

Learn More, Do More

Follow *Solitary Refinement* on Facebook:

Facebook.com/SolRef2018

Post your thoughts and what you've learned with the hashtag, #SolitaryRefinement.



Social Media Images



VOMCanada.com
/Dramas/Drama-Social

Draw for the Persecuted



VOMCanada.com
/ArtContest.htm

Sign up for Emails



VOMCanada.com
/pnpord.html

Pray from Scripture



VOMCanada.com
/prayer.htm

Daily Twitter Prayer Requests



Twitter.com/VOMC

Follow VOMC on Facebook



Facebook.com/VOMCanada