

3. Listed below are a few of the Old Testament saints who died in faith looking ahead to the promised Messiah. Read about them and list some facts: Who were they? How and why were they killed? Add your thoughts and what the Lord speaks to your heart. *Note: It would be helpful to you to read the entire chapter for context.*

1 Samuel 22:17-19 ~ the priests of the Lord

1 Kings 18:3-4 ~ the prophets of the Lord

2 Chronicles 24:18-22 ~ Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest

Jeremiah 26:20-24 ~ Urijah a prophet

Mark 6:14-29 ~ John the Baptist

6. At the time of Stephen's death Saul (the apostle Paul) was persecuting the church (*Acts 8:1-3; 26:9-10*). Once he was converted (*Acts 9*), Paul gave his life wholly and completely to the Lord and preached the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Because of this, he suffered much persecution and was eventually beheaded for his faith in Christ.

A. In **2 Corinthians 11:23-28**, the apostle Paul gives us a small glimpse of some of the trials and persecution he faced. Please read the passage and give a description.

B. Read **2 Timothy 4:6-8**. How and why could Paul finish his race in confidence?

7. Listed below are a variety of Scriptures on martyrdom and persecution. Please read each of them and write down what the Lord speaks to your heart.

Acts 12:1-2 ~

Revelation 2:13 ~

1 Peter 2:20 ~

1 Peter 3:13-17 ~

2 Timothy 3:10-12 ~

John 15:18 - 16:33 ~

Matthew 10:39 ~

Psalm 116:15 ~

8. How have you been challenged to have a *bold faith* in Christ by this lesson? What changes, if any, do you need to make to not only live for Christ, but also to be ready to die for Christ if need be?

There are faithful followers of Jesus Christ all over this world today who will not compromise when authorities forbid congregating and evangelizing in the name of Christ. Many are imprisoned; many are tortured; many are killed.

*“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also.”
Hebrews 13:3*

These are our brothers and sisters in Christ. Spend some time in prayer for them today.

For your reading and edification, listed below are a few books on “modern” day martyrs. These titles may be found in the lending library and the Chapel Store.

Jesus Freaks by DC Talk & Voice of the Martyrs

By Their Blood: Christian Martyrs of the 20th Century by James & Marti Hefley

Their Blood Cries Out by Paul Marshall

In the Lion's Den by Nina Shea

Through the Gates of Splendor by Elisabeth Elliot

Bold As a Lamb by Ken Anderson

Tortured for Christ by & about Richard Wurmbrand

Prisoners of Hope: the story of our Captivity and Freedom in Afghanistan by Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer