



Day of the
Christian
Martyr
2026

INTRODUCTION:

The primary environment for the discipleship of children is within the family (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4). Children are capable of participating in age-appropriate conversations about spiritual principles.

This guide demonstrates a way leaders within a family unit can engage both older and younger children in foundational conversations about fellowship within the global body of Christ and about the opposition that our Christian brothers and sisters face. Children as young as 4 or 5 years old can have beginning conversations that plant the seeds of God's truth in their hearts and minds and build upon that foundational truth with more in-depth conversations and Scripture reading.

INDIA: THE PRISON PASTOR

The following story is adapted from the two-part VOM Radio episode about Pastor Paul.

Pastor Paul was visiting villages in Northern India to tell other people about Jesus when he was arrested by police and accused of forcing Hindu villagers to convert to Christianity. He wasn't forcing anyone, however. He had simply been sharing Jesus with people who expressed a hunger to know more about him. When the police arrived, Paul and his coworkers were eating together, not having a worship service or studying the Bible. Still, it was considered a crime.

"Which god are you praying to?" police asked. Little did Pastor Paul know how much his faith would be tested as he heard that question repeatedly over the coming weeks.

Pastor Paul and his three gospel coworkers suffered tremendously in police custody. Police threatened them constantly, and they were fearful. The four Christians were forced into a filthy prison cell that also served as the police station toilet. They

were repeatedly offered freedom if they would renounce their faith in Jesus Christ. When they didn't, the police stood by and allowed a mob of radical Hindus to beat them.

Paul asked God to strengthen him. "Lord, please help me not to fear their words, because you are in charge of every situation," he prayed. "You controlled the lion's mouth when Daniel went inside." God sustained him even when his coworkers renounced Christ and turned their backs on him in order to escape the prison.

As Pastor Paul fervently prayed, the Lord provided many opportunities for him to share his faith in Christ and the strength to stand firm against the enemy's schemes. The Lord opened other prisoners' hearts to hear more about his faith as they watched Pastor Paul. Living out 1 Peter 3:15, he made the most of every opportunity to share the hope of Jesus Christ.

Mistreatment and terrible prison conditions impacted Paul's health. He thought he was going to die. When his wife was finally allowed to visit, he assumed it would be the last time he ever saw her on earth. He encouraged her to continue forward with Christ and not turn back, even if he died in prison.

Paul had two final requests as he cried out to the Lord. The first was to see many come to Christ in the state of Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state not just in India but in the entire world. The second was for the Lord to allow another pastor to be arrested and come to encourage him in prison. "Lord, arrest one pastor and bring him to be in prison so we can have fellowship," he prayed.

God answered Paul's prayer, and four days later, he read in the newspaper that a pastor had been arrested. Two weeks later, that same pastor was with Paul in the prison and brought great encouragement: "My church has been praying for you!"

Not long after the newly imprisoned pastor arrived, Paul said his weary faith became "like concrete." The two began to pray together in prison. Soon, other prisoners were asking for prayer. The pastors would often raise their hands in prayer, claiming spiritual victory. When prison guards asked what they were doing, they said, "We are praying for you!"

The pastors had the opportunity to pray with 70 other prisoners who came to them for prayer and to know more about Jesus. God used Pastor Paul and his fellow pastor to bring the truth of Christ to those in prison. While Pastor Paul was in prison,

Christians from around the world heard about him and helped provide support, like food and prayer, for his wife and children.

Eventually, Pastor Paul was released from prison, but he is still waiting for a trial date to determine his guilt on the false charges of “forcing Hindus” to convert to Christianity. Pastor Paul continues to visit the prison and disciple the men who came to faith in Christ through his witness.

Continue to pray that Pastor Paul will be strong in his faith and that the men who placed their trust in Christ in prison will grow in their faith.



DISCUSSING PASTOR PAUL'S STORY WITH CHILDREN

LIFE IN INDIA VS. LIFE HERE

- How do you think Pastor Paul's life in India is different from your life here?
- Is there anything about his life that is similar to yours?
- What do you think Pastor Paul's family felt like while he was in prison?
- Do you think the situation was easy or hard for them? Why?

LIVING A GODLY LIFE

Read Philippians 1:27 together: *"You must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ."*

- What do you think it means to live as "citizens of heaven"?
- What does it mean to conduct yourselves "in a manner worthy" of the gospel?
- What are some ways Pastor Paul showed that he was a follower of Christ?
- What did he do that showed he wanted to obey Jesus?

LIVING BOLDLY FOR JESUS

- What do you think “opposition” means?

Opposition: A hostile or contrary action or condition; something that opposes.

- How can you tell if someone is hostile toward you or standing against you?
- Who or what was opposing Pastor Paul as he shared the Good News of Christ?
- Why do you think the police didn’t want him talking about Jesus?

Read John 15:18 together: *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.”*

- Do you think Pastor Paul knew he might face punishment for sharing Christ in India?
- Why do you think he shared about Jesus even when others hated him for it?

WHAT IS PERSECUTION?

Persecution means Christians are treated badly for believing in Jesus by those who want them to stop living out their faith. Persecution may take many different forms. Christians are sometimes told by their neighbors, government authorities or even family members to stop worshiping God. They sometimes lose their jobs or may not be able to get a good job. Christians are sometimes kicked out of the place where they live. Their Bibles might be taken away or destroyed. Christians can be beaten and arrested.

- What kinds of persecution did Pastor Paul face?
- How does it make you feel knowing some Christians go through persecution for their faith?

STAYING STRONG WITH JESUS

- How do you think Pastor Paul felt while he was forced to live in the toilet room? What do you think might have given him strength to keep going?
- Have you ever gone through a hard time that made you feel like giving up?
- Who or what helped you keep going?

Read Psalm 23 together.

- What did God promise for those who walk through difficulty (see verse 4)?
- How did you see that God was with Pastor Paul, even when he was in prison?

LEARNING FROM PASTOR PAUL'S STORY

- Who is someone you look up to?
- What makes them special?
- What part of Pastor Paul's story do you think is inspiring or special?

CARING AND PRAYING FOR OTHERS

- How do you feel when someone says they are praying for you?
- Do you pray for the people you love? What do you pray for?
- Is there anything in Pastor Paul's story you'd like to pray about? Take a moment to pray together.
- Who is someone you could tell Pastor Paul's story to?
- When can you share this story with them so they can also pray for him and other Christians in India?

