



CONVERSATION GUIDE: TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

INTRODUCTION:

The primary environment for discipleship of children to occur 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 how 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 four or five 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.

CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR CHILDREN



Kham La

After wrongfully being put in jail, an evangelist in the country of Laos shared the gospel with fellow inmates.

Kham La and his family live in the small nation of Laos. He is a type of farmer called a “subsistence farmer,” which means he works hard on a very small plot of land to raise vegetables. Once the vegetables are harvested, he, his wife and their five children take the produce to markets in different villages to sell it. Everyone in the area knows Kham La and his family.

When Kham La became a Christian, everyone soon knew. He was bold in sharing his faith with the people who bought his vegetables, and many people gathered to hear his story. But not everyone was interested in hearing about Jesus. Many Laotians, especially government leaders, view Christianity as a foreign religion and something Western nations (like the United States) are using to take power away from the government of Laos.



The police constantly watched Kham La and tried to prevent him from traveling in his own area, thinking that they could disrupt his ability to sell fruits and vegetables at the market and stop him from spreading the gospel. But because of warnings from the police, local people grew even more curious about Christianity and sought out Kham La to ask him questions about Jesus. Kham La knew he might be arrested for sharing the gospel, but he boldly did so anyway.

While the ongoing persecution from the police created hardships, Kham La found that being at the center of attention for the anger of the police and other authorities also served a powerful purpose. He even told other, more timid Christians to let him attract all the attention of the police and take any blame. Kham La would tell them, “Tell the police that you accepted Jesus through me [my witness]. I will go to jail for you.” His only condition was that they remain faithful and not deny Christ.

The police finally decided to do their best to stop Kham La, and they requested that he meet with them at the police station. Before Kham La left with one of his sons to meet with the police, he and his whole family gathered to pray. When he arrived, the police arrested him without any explanation or without filing a charge. They handcuffed him and led him to a jail cell.

After being questioned, the authorities led him to a larger jail cell with 61 other prisoners. With not much else to do, Kham La began talking — about Jesus! He shared his testimony of how he came to faith in Christ, and he encouraged the other prisoners to trust in Christ as well.

In Laotian jails, a prisoner’s family must provide daily essentials for their loved one, and since Kham La had not been allowed contact with his family, he had very little food. He received only a small portion of rice each day. Sometimes, other prisoners would give him some scraps to eat.

While Kham La was imprisoned, his family worked hard to find him and get legal help. Eventually, a front-line worker who supports persecuted Christians in Laos helped the family track Kham La through the prison system.

Three weeks after his arrest, Kham La finally saw his family. Kham La’s family had learned that he was arrested because the authorities had fined him \$25. Even though they had not told him of the fine, he was arrested when it wasn’t paid. Because of how the case was handled, Kham La could have filed charges against the local authorities. Instead, he paid the fine and was released.

Kham La has decided not to sue the government authorities and has forgiven them. He said, “I have given it to God. I will not sue.”

The government officials continue to threaten those who become Christians, saying that they, too, might be arrested like Kham La was. Kham La continues to pray for those he was imprisoned with and even invites the police to Christmas celebrations.



Christians who live in other places around the world, like Kham La and his family, are our family members because we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

“You are members of God’s family” (Ephesians 2:19). As Christians, both those who live in another country and those who live with us in our country are members of God’s family. We are brothers and sisters with people we haven’t even met yet!



Discussing Kham La’s Story with Children

LIFE IN LAOS VS. LIFE HERE

- How do you think Kham La’s life in Laos is different from your life here?
- Is there anything about his life that is similar to yours?
- What do you think it is like for Kham La and his family to grow their own food?
- Do you think it is easy or hard? Why?
- Everyone knew Kham La and his family. How could that be a good thing?

LOVING GOD

Read John 14:15 together. *“If you love me, keep my commandments.”*

- What do you think it means to love God with all your heart?
- What is a commandment?
- What are some of God’s commandments that you know?
- How do you know Kham La loves God?
- What did he do that showed he wanted to obey Jesus?



LIVING BOLDLY FOR JESUS

- What do you think “opposition” means?
- How can you tell if someone is standing against you?
- Who or what was trying to stop Kham La?
- 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 Kham La knew he might get in trouble for talking about God? Why do you think he still shared about Jesus?

WHAT IS PERSECUTION?

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

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

STAYING STRONG WITH JESUS

- How do you think Kham La felt in prison with very little food?
- Have you ever gone through a really hard time that made you feel like giving up?
- Who or what helped you keep going?

Read Psalm 34:18 together. *“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted.”*

- What does it mean that God is close to people who are sad or hurting?
- Do you think God was near to Kham La in prison? Why?

LEARNING FROM KHAM LA’S STORY

- Who is someone you look up to?
- What makes them special?
- What part of Kham La’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 Kham La's story you'd like to pray about? Take a moment to pray together.
- Who is someone you could tell Kham La's story to?
- Would you like to share it so they can also pray?