

THE POSTURE OF PERSISTENCE

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From videos of utter chaos and panic, to pictures of weeping and lamenting, our social media platforms are being flooded with a visual reality of the horrific events taking place in Afghanistan.

The excerpt below is an official statement from underground church leaders in Afghanistan published by Frontier Alliance International:

"What we are witnessing right now is the decimation of the country and people of Afghanistan. We are watching twenty years of work and the strengthening of a nation being destroyed in a single day

The Taliban has a hit list of known Christians they are targeting to pursue and kill. The US Embassy is defunct and there is no longer a safe place for believers to take refuge. All borders to neighboring countries are closed and all flights to and from have been halted with the exception of private planes. People are fleeing to the mountains looking for asylum. They are fully reliant on God, who is the only One who can and will protect them.

The Taliban are going door-to-door taking women and children. The people must mark their house with an "X" if they have a girl over 12 years old, so that the Taliban can take them. If they find a young girl and the house was not marked they will execute the entire family. If a married woman 25 years or older has been found, the Taliban promptly kill her husband, do whatever they want to her, and then sell her as a sex slave.

Husbands and fathers have given their wives and daughters guns and told them that when the Taliban come, they can choose to kill them or kill themselves—it is their choice."

Frontier Alliance International 2021,

accessed 18 August 2021, <www.faimission.org/wire/afghanistan-official-statement-underground-church>

If we take a panoramic view of global events today, one obvious truth comes to surface, there is suffering everywhere. And if we take a panoramic view of eschatological passages, portions in Scripture that emphasize the end of the age and the coming of the Son of Man, one obvious truth also comes to surface, suffering will only get worse!

In light of all the injustice and sorrow, how should we respond? As part of His global church, what should be our posture?

To address these questions, we turn to the parable of the Persistent Widow in Luke 18. Although the Judge was described as having no fear of God nor respect for man, the widow, in midst of suffering injustice, was persistent in pleading for mercy despite the character of this judge.

Luke 18:5 says,

*"yet because **this widow keeps bothering me**, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming."*

The widow was persistent. Her determination and perseverance, fueled by sheer brokenness and desperation, caused the unrighteous judge to finally give in to her pleas for justice. After giving this parable to His disciples, in verses 7 and 8, Jesus hammers the purpose of the parable. If this unrighteous judge gave in to the widow's plea for mercy because of her persistence, how much more will God "give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to

them speedily." (Luke 18:7-8a)

In light of the injustice and sorrow, this is how we ought to respond! As part of His global church, this ought to be our posture! Just like the widow who was persistent in her pleas for justice, as a church, as disciples and followers of Jesus, we ought to be persistent in our cries for justice and deliverance! If this widow believed that this unrighteous judge would be able to provide justice for her, how much more should we believe that God hears us! That God knows! That God sees! That God will deliver us!

As Jesus ended this teaching moment for his disciples, He asked them an important question that we must continue to ponder on,

"Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8b)

As we remember our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan, and the many others who suffer globally, may we cry out day and night persistently for His justice and deliverance with full assurance that He is, indeed, coming soon. May we be found faithful all the way until the end. Maranatha! ✝

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