

THE BOOK OF ACTS

welcome to the journey

Session (3): Persecution & Proclamation

IN - helping a sense of belonging...

Invite members to share with the group any personal experience of 'opposition' as a result of being known as a Christian

How did you feel at the time?
What are your reflections now?

Genesis 41:52

Joseph after all he suffered and went through says 'God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.'

How and why was that possible?

UP - hearing from God and growing...

Begin worship with a reading of some of Isaiah 53.....perhaps with the group each reading a verse at a time.

Share which phrase most impacted you.

Thank both the Father & Son for embracing suffering on our behalf.

OUT - impacting others...

Pray for each other in respect of any opposition you may be currently experiencing.

Just as important identify and pray for the church undergoing persecution around the world. Get specific not waffly! Eg Syriah, North Korea, Indonesia

If possible ask someone to do some background. I recommend googling **I D O P –Remember their Chains**

Finally..... perhaps you could make this an ongoing commitment to pray.

**LIFEgroup
Notes**

BIBLE READING:

Isaiah 53

Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested?

For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished.

9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes[c] his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

11 After he has suffered, he will see the light of life[d] and be satisfied by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors.

For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.