

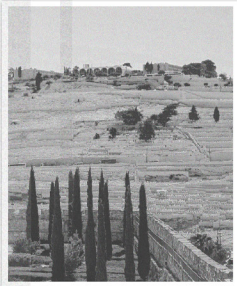


that you may

# BELIEVE

The Purpose of This Book

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Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.



## “SCARY THINGS” discussion questions

1. 2 Corinthians 4:13 says, “It is written: ‘I believed; therefore I have spoken.’ Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak.” To what extent do you freely speak what you believe? If fear wasn’t part of the equation, how would that look different?
2. It may not seem like the world “hates” you, but that’s the word that Jesus used. Have you ever seen glimpses of this reality unmasked in your own life and experience? Did it surprise you? How did you deal with it?
3. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:26, “If one member suffers, all suffer together.” And Hebrews 13:3 says, “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.” How many of us really do that? Most of us probably don’t view all the persecuted believers abroad as our personal family members, but in reality, they are. How should these verses practically impact our lives today?
4. What is your “sufferology”? (That is, your theology of suffering.) Why does God call some to severely suffer for their faith, but not others? How is being a Christian in America challenging in different ways, than outright persecution? Brainstorm all the various truths, mindsets, and practices that the Bible offers, which can help us respond to persecution or personal injustice in a biblical way.
5. Take a little time to remember the millions of people around the world who are not free to worship, and ask God to grant the following to our brothers and sisters behind bars and those who live in constant threat of persecution for their belief and trust in Jesus:

**Peace.** In the chaos and brutality of prison and persecution, ask the Lord to give his children “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding” (Phil. 4:7).

**Endurance.** Ask God to give persecuted Christians the endurance they need to keep praying and witnessing to others.

**Forgiveness.** Pray God would give them heavenly eyes to see their captors as humans in need of God’s love, and for grace to forgive them for their abuse, torture, starvation and mistreatment.

**Boldness.** Ask God to give Christians boldness and courage to witness to their captors and cellmates. Pray that God would grant Christians words to speak and show them deeds to do.

**Liberation.** Pray God would break prisoners’ chains – that their cases would be resolved, charges dismissed, and cell doors opened. Ask him for their freedom to worship without harassment or fear.

### The Book of John

The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God.<sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, yet the world did not know him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.<sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men.<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.<sup>7</sup> He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

<sup>8</sup> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.<sup>9</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.<sup>10</sup> He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.<sup>11</sup> But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,<sup>12</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>13</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.<sup>14</sup> (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’) <sup>15</sup> For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.<sup>16</sup> For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup> No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

