

**LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS - "HOPE FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH"
II THESSALONIANS 1:1-12**

1. Is world-wide persecution of Christians increasing or decreasing? Who are the major persecutors in our modern world?
2. What is the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church? Why is it important for us to observe it in our local churches?
3. Who were Richard and Sabrina Wurmbrand? How did Matthew 10:34-39 and Mark 8:35 become their "life verses" under Communist persecution?
4. In 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4 Paul commends the Thessalonian church for their endurance under persecution. He tells us that we "ought" to be grateful to God for those who are persecuted. Why does Paul say that gratitude is a duty for all Christians?
5. Why did Pastor Ross say, "Gratitude is an act of grace, not legalism; grace always produces gratitude."?
6. What happens to a congregation when a pastor focuses only on "grace" and never preaches or teaches about Christian duty?
7. When we hear the word "grace," how do we interpret that word differently than those underpersecution?
8. In 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, Paul talks about the return of Christ and the Final Judgment. He indicates that this coming judgment should be a source of comfort for persecuted Christians. For what 3 reasons is the judgment of God a comfort to persecuted Christians?
9. Persecution is always two opposite things at the same time: a badge of honor and a mark of guilty shame. Explain why this is so.
10. Pastor Ross pointed out "the three 'R's' of Judgment." What were they and how are they related?
11. Paul's prayer report in 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 set before us 3 spiritual challenges. What were they and how do they relate to us who are not suffering persecution?