





Then Herod...sent and **killed all the male children** in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under (Mat 2:16)

1. Horror of a Sinful World







**“A recovery of the old sense of sin
is essential to Christianity.”**

CS Lewis

1. Horror of a Sinful World

2. Hostility in a Sinful World

Matthew 2:13

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

Matthew 2:22–23

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being **warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth**, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

John 1:11

He came to his own,
and his own people did not receive him.









ASIA

China cracks down on unofficial Christian church



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Asia

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Bookmark



Christians in China are split between unofficial "house" or "underground" churches like the Early Rain Covenant Church, and state-sanctioned churches. (Photo: AFP/GREG BAKER)

“My saviour Christ also requires me to joyfully
bear all costs for disobeying wicked laws,”

“I hope God uses me, by means of first losing my personal freedom, to tell those who have deprived me of my personal freedom that there is an authority higher than their authority, and that there is a freedom that they cannot restrain, a freedom that fills the church of the crucified and risen Jesus Christ.”



Beloved brothers, sisters, and fellow workers:

Thank the Lord! Just as the year 2018 is about to end God has given us a reward in the form of this large-scale persecution that arrived on December 9.

Since yesterday evening until noon today, over 100 pastors, elders, staff, brothers and sisters have been taken away. As of now we still do not know where they all are, and even if we did know it would be difficult for us to help them.

But, thankfully, we know for certain that the Lord's loving face is shining upon them. They are within the gracious, sovereign providence of the Lord. He will be with them in the midst of their chains and trials.

The Apostle Peter says, "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you." (1 Pet. 4:12-14)

We are willing to pay an even greater price to bear witness to the great work of the gospel in our lives. We are willing to have 200, 300, or 500 people arrested and imprisoned.

May the whole world know that we are joyfully willing to receive this persecution for the sake of our faith.

May you all be filled with joy in the gospel of Christ.
May you welcome, filled with hope, the even heavier
cross and more difficult lives that lie ahead of you.

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Christ is Lord.
Grace is King.
Bear the cross.
Keep the faith.

2. Hostility in a Sinful World

3. Hope for a Sinful World

Matthew 2:17–18

Then was fulfilled what was spoken
by the prophet Jeremiah:

“A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted,
because they are no more.”

Matthew 2:17–18

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(Quote from Jer 31:15)

Jeremiah 31:33–34

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.

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And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,'

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And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

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