



“Would you die for Jesus?”

Every now and then I switch the Question FOR Pastor to a Question FROM Pastor. That’s the case this month.

The question above is one that came up in Violet’s 3-4th Grade Sunday School class. It came up after Violet mentioned that history tells us all of the disciples (except John) were killed for proclaiming their faith in Jesus.

The Bible recounts for us in Acts chapter 7 that the first martyr (a word whose original meaning is ‘witness’!) was Stephen, one of the men the disciples had chosen to be a deacon in the church at Jerusalem. The Bible also tells us that James, son of Zebedee was the first disciple to lose his life for being a follower of Jesus.

It’s a question that, not long ago, may have seemed an abstract question with the common idea that being killed for faith in Jesus “wouldn’t happen here.” But that ‘couldn’t happen here’ thought had to be re-evaluated in 1999. Some of you may remember the school shooting at Columbine HS in Colorado that year. It was reported that one of the students was asked by the killer if she believed in God - and then was shot because she answered ‘Yes.’ The recent movie I’m Not Ashamed was based on that girl’s life and her faith in Jesus.

We now live in a world where far too many people think nothing of killing Christians. Just last week 20 Christians were killed in Egypt, specifically because they were Christian.

It’s not an easy question to answer. We all hope that our answer would be “Yes.” But then we might also be afraid we’d be like Peter who, the day before Jesus died, boldly stated in Matthew 26:33, “Even if all [the other disciples] fall I way on account of You, I never will.” And then, the very next day, denied (3 times!) that he even knew Jesus. But after witnessing Jesus risen from the grave, that same apostle Peter did die for Jesus - even asking to be crucified upside down, not feeling worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord had died.

The students in that Sunday School class and Violet answered, “Yes,” when they asked each other that question.

God grant us all the courage to do the same - with the remembrance that death could not keep Jesus down, and He promises that same resurrection to eternal life for all who have faith in Him.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net