

## Foundations – Martyrdom/Maranatha

*Identities - "I am made in the image of God. I am the light of the world. I am an eternal being."*

### I. Martyrdom: To Know Jesus is to Walk in His Footsteps...

- Martyrdom: To \_\_\_\_\_ for what you believe in.
- Revelation 6:9-11: The importance of martyrdom:
- Hebrews 11:4: The first man commended for his faith was \_\_\_\_\_. The first man to do something notably good for God was \_\_\_\_\_ for it.
- Acts 6:8 – Acts 8:1: The first person to die in the name of Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_.
- Acts 7:56: The significance of Jesus' position before Stephen died:
- Philippians 3:10: To know Jesus completely is to live the life He lived.
- John 16:2 – "Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God." (ESV)
- 2 Timothy 3:12 – Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." (ESV)
- Soldier's Mentality: Every soldier understands that his calling might lead to death, but he is willing because he knows that he is serving a cause much greater than himself.
- Stories of Martyrs (taken from Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* [Pure Gold Classics]):

### II. Maranatha: The Cry of God's People

- Maranatha means \_\_\_\_\_!
- Hebrews 11:13-16 - Those who lived by faith were living for \_\_\_\_\_.
- Hosea 6:6: God's desire is a \_\_\_\_\_ with us.
- The only thing truly worth living for is \_\_\_\_\_.

- Revelation 21:4 – “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” (ESV)
- Revelation 22:20-21 – “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.” (ESV)

### III. New Identities!

- I am made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).
- I am the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).
- I am an eternal being (Romans 6:23).

### IV. Small Group Questions

1) How would you like to die? How do you want to live your life until then? How do you think the Lord wants you to live your life? Are you willing to die for Him?

2) If you could have anything— anything at all— what would it be? Think hard. After answering, do you think God has even better things for you? Are you willing to bet your life on that?

3) You were made in the image of God. You are the light of the world. You are an eternal being. These are just three of your many identities in Christ. With your identities in mind, why does Satan fear you? How do your identities enable you to pray with power and with confidence?

4) What are the 25 identities we have covered? What does each mean for us?

*Memory Verse of the Week –*

## Foundations – Martyrdom/Maranatha (Master)

*Identities - "I am made in the image of God. I am the light of the world. I am an eternal being."*

### I. Martyrdom: To Know Jesus is to Walk in His Footsteps

- Martyrdom: To die for what you believe in.
- Revelation 6:9-11: The importance of martyrdom:

Why is this important? God is not so much looking for a specific death count before He will return; what He is really looking for is the church as a whole to become pure and to live a life that is wholly surrendered to Him. It is when the church is truly willing to completely live and die for Him that it will be ready and worthy of His return. Jesus does not want to return for a reluctant or ashamed lover. He wants a bride that loves Him just as much as He loved us— a love that is willing to endure death.

- Hebrews 11:4: The first man commended for his faith was Abel. The first man to do something notably good for God was killed for it.

Abel loved God and set God first in his life, and this is what led to his death. Abel serves as an example to all who wish to live for God. By living for God we are showing that our treasure is not of this world.

- Acts 6:8 – Acts 8:1 (summarize if lacking time): The first to die in the name of Jesus was Stephen.
- Acts 7:56: The significance of Jesus' position before Stephen died:

All throughout the *Bible*, where is God in heaven? He is seated on the throne. And Jesus is seated at the right hand of the throne of God (Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; Heb 8:1; Heb 10:12; Heb 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22, etc). But we see hear in verse 56 that Stephen sees Jesus "*standing* at the right hand of God." Stephen, in his greatest time of need, just before being stoned to death, has a clear vision of Jesus in heaven. And, Jesus is standing. Jesus, filled with compassion over the first man to not just live but even die for Him, chooses to stand from His throne. By showing Himself, He grants Stephen the strength he needs to die for Him.

- Philippians 3:10: To know Jesus completely is to live the life He lived.

We are able to experience God in praise, in fellowship, in prayer, and in the Word. But, to truly know Him is to suffer for Him. It is often when we suffer that we feel God the most, as we receive true revelation of the sacrifice, pain, and suffering that He endured for us. It is when we endure rejection that we are able to relate to the rejection that Christ received. It is when we endure pain that we are able to relate to the pain Christ took for us.

- John 16:2 – "Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God." (ESV)
- 2 Timothy 3:12 – Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." (ESV)
- Soldier's Mentality: Every soldier understands that his calling might lead to death, but he is willing because he knows that he is serving a cause much greater than himself.

- Stories of Martyrs (taken from Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* [Pure Gold Classics]):

### **China 1977**

In Kiangsi, China, two Christian girls, Chui-Chin-Hsiu and Ho Hsiu Tzu, and their pastor were sentenced to death. As on many such occasions in church history, the persecutors mocked and scorned them for being so foolish as to die for an unseen God. Then they promised the pastor that if he would shoot the girls they would release him. He accepted.

The girls waited patiently in their prison cells for the moment of their execution. They prayed quietly together. Soon guards came for them and led them out. A fellow-prisoner, who watched the execution through the barred window of his prison cell, said that their faces were pale but beautiful beyond belief, infinitely sad but sweet. They were placed against a wall, and their pastor was brought forward by two guards. They placed him close in front of the girls and put a pistol into his hand.

The girls whispered to each other, then bowed respectfully to their pastor. One of them said:

Before being shot by you, we wish to thank you heartily for what you have meant to us. You baptized us, you taught us the way of eternal life, you gave us holy communion with the same hand in which you now have a gun. May God reward you for all that you have done for us. You also taught us that Christians are sometimes weak and commit terrible sins, but they can be forgiven again. When you regret what you are about to do to us, do not despair like Judas, but repent like Peter. God bless you, and remember that our last thought of you was not one of indignation against your failure. Everyone passes through hours of darkness. We die with gratitude.

They bowed again to their pastor, closed their eyes, and stood silently waiting.

The pastor had obviously hardened his heart—he raised the pistol and shot them. No sooner had they fallen to the ground, then the Communist guards put him against the wall for immediate execution. As they shot him, no one heard words of repentance, only the sound of screaming.

### **Indonesia 1999**

In January, a *Bible* camp was held at the Station Field Complex at Pattimura University on the island of Ambon. Just as the camp was closing, a raging Muslim mob raced toward it, attacking those who were preparing to leave and those still in the camp.

When those in the camp heard the shouts and chants of the mob, they hid wherever they could. Assistant Pastor Hendrick P.H. Pattiwael took his wife and young children and hid in a room in one of the buildings. But it was no use, the mob searched every building, forcing every Christian out into the open where they could vent their fury upon them.

When Pastor Pattiwael heard the mob shouting and racing through the building where he was hiding with his family, he came out of the room, leaving his wife and children in hiding, and convinced the Muslims that he was the only one there and led them away from the room.

Inside the room, Mrs. Pattiwael heard her husband cry out with a loud voice, "Jesus, help me!" Then she heard the mob leaving, and all was quiet. She waited in the room for several hours, and only came out when she was certain the mob had left the camp. But though she looked throughout the University grounds, she could not find her husband. It was not until several days later that she learned that the Muslim mob had beaten and stabbed her husband to death.

She learned of his death from the police, who came to where she was staying and took her to the home of her husband's family, where they had taken his body when it was found. There she saw her husband lying in a coffin, his body full of bruises and stab wounds in his chest, shoulders, arm, and abdomen—all speaking of a slow, torturous, death at the hands of the vicious mob, venting their hate on him for his faith in Jesus Christ, and for his refusal to bow to their god, Allah.

When Mrs. Pattiwael saw her husband's body she was shocked and felt that God had not protected him. For some time she was bitterly disappointed that God had allowed such a thing to

happen to him and could not understand it. But, it wasn't long before she somehow began to know within herself that her husband's sacrifice was precious in God's eyes. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15).

She remembered also that a few days before her husband's death he asked her, "Do you love Jesus?" She, of course, said she did. But then he went on to tell her that if she loved Jesus, but loved her husband or family more, then she was not worthy of God's kingdom. Then he said to her, as if he somehow knew what was soon to happen to him, "I am ready to die for Jesus."

Mrs. Pattiwael has come to believe that God gives His children the best, even during difficult times—and that He is absolutely in full control of our lives. When a Christian worker from the United States asked her what Christians in free countries should do, she said, "Seek God more earnestly, so they can stand [firm with Jesus Christ] in the midst of trouble."

### **Indonesia 1999**

In January, Christian children and teenagers attended a *Bible* camp at the Station Field Complex at Pattimura University on the island of Ambon. When the camp was over, cars were to take the laughing, rejoicing, children and young people back to their homes, but there were many of them and not enough cars. So Pastor Mecky Sainyakit and three other Christian men left for Wakal Village to rent more transportation.

On their way to the village, they were stopped by a mob of Muslims who pulled them from their car and attacked them. Pastor Mecky and one of the other men were stabbed to death—the other two men escaped. The raging mob then burned the bodies of the two Christian men they had just brutally murdered.

Back in the *Bible* camp at the University, the children and young people became frightened when they heard shouts of death and Muslim chants coming toward them. They rushed around trying to find hiding places, but when the mob reached the University they forced many of them out into the open. One of them was fifteen-year-old Roy Pontoh.

Roy was terribly frightened, trembling with fear, but not so frightened that he would renounce his faith in Jesus Christ when he was threatened with death by the mob. And when they told him that he must become a Muslim, a soldier of Allah, the teenager mustered all the courage he had and with a quivering voice declared, "I am a soldier of Christ."

Hearing those words, an enraged Muslim attacker swung a sword at Roy's stomach, knocking out of his hands a *Bible* that he held out in front of him. Then he swung his sword again, and sliced through Roy's stomach, ripping it open. Just before he died, Roy said one final word that had eternal meaning and truth in it: "Jesus."

The mob then dragged Roy's body away and threw it into a ditch, like it was the body of a dead animal. Four days later his family found his body, took it home, cleaned it, and gave Roy a Christian burial. Although often torn by grief, Roy's Christian parents are proud that their young son's faith in Jesus Christ stood firm and strong.

## **II. Maranatha: The Cry of God's People**

- Maranatha means Come, Lord Jesus!

Maranatha was the greeting of believers from the early church. Rather than, "Hello" or "Good morning," they would greet each other with, "Maranatha!"— "Come, Lord Jesus!" This was the focus of their life.

- Hebrews 11:13-16— Those who lived by faith were living for heaven.

Many of the great people in the *Bible*, including those in Hebrews 11, were rich men, kings, victorious warriors, and mighty prophets. But none of them were content with their lives on earth. The name Hebrew means, "a passer through." Even the people around them recognized that these

followers of God were not settling anywhere on earth, but rather were simply “passing through.” Their desire was for heaven and nothing else could come close to it. They wanted to be with God.

- Hosea 6:6: God’s desire is a relationship with us.

More than good works, more than beautiful praise music, more than anything else— God wants a relationship with us. He wants us to know Him and be with Him. Works, miracles, praises— these do not impress God. He has seen and heard it all. He is the one who enables us to do such works in the first place. What impresses God is a heart that truly yearns for Him and will do anything to be with Him; He desires a heart that truly longs to know HIM.

- The only thing truly worth living for is Jesus.

Earthly things, no matter how expensive or how beautiful or how rare, only satisfy so long and so much. Even miracles and powerful demonstrations of God’s glory— even the salvation of family members and of nations— while these things are wonderful and truly blessed, they do not complete us. Only a personal relationship with God can complete us. If our emotions are tied into anything else, we will be left unsatisfied. Jesus and Jesus’ love must be our motive in everything for us to truly be complete. The desire and cry of our life must be, “Come, Lord Jesus.” It is in Him that we have life and have it to the full.

- Revelation 21:4 – “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” ESV
- Revelation 22:20-21 – “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.” (ESV)

### III. New Identities!

- I am made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).

This is the identity that Satan, perhaps, detests the most. Every time he sees mankind, he sees the image of God whom he rebelled against. Satan wants us to believe we evolved from monkeys. He wants us to get so consumed by sin that we act like animals without morals. He wants us to be judged by God just as he was. But thankfully Jesus shed His blood for us so that we can claim God’s forgiveness for all our sins. So when God looks upon us, He does not see filthy, sinful beings. Rather, He sees beautiful men and women covered by His grace, reflecting the image of His Son. We are truly to be admired. We don’t resemble the things of this world, instead we resemble Christ. Please repeat after me, “I am made in the image of God.” Amen!

- I am the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).

Not only do we resemble Christ by our physical image, we also reflect Christ through the Holy Spirit who lives within us. Because we are dead to sin and alive in Christ, we no longer live by the ways of darkness of this world. We live in obedience to God. There is a glow, a warmth, a love that comes from us that is unworldly. As we live in obedience to God, our lives are going to shine before all who are around us. Colossians 1:27 says, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (ESV). Please repeat after me, “I am the light of the world.” Amen!

- I am an eternal being (Romans 6:23).

Our lifespan is not governed by our time here on earth. Our physical body may perish, but our spiritual being will never perish. We are eternal. What that means is that our lives are just a blink in the light of eternity. Why should we worry about the treasures and comforts of this world when we will be spending eternity in heaven? Why should we fear torture or death here on earth when we know we will be living forever in peace, comfort, and joy? We have already won! It is finished! We have eternal life! Who or what are we to fear? When you claim you are an eternal being you are claiming victory over every lie of Satan. He can't touch you because you already know the end result. He gets grabbed by an angel and thrown in Hell while you spend eternity with Jesus. Please repeat after me, "I am an eternal being." Amen!

#### **IV. Small Group Questions**

1) How would you like to die? How do you want to live your life until then? How do you think the Lord wants you to live your life? Are you willing to die for Him?

2) If you could have anything... anything at all... what would it be? Think hard. After answering, do you think God has even better things for you? Are you willing to bet your life on that?

3) You were made in the image of God. You are the light of the world. You are an eternal being. These are just three of your many identities in Christ. With your identities in mind, why does Satan fear you? How do your identities enable you to pray with power and with confidence?

4) What are the 25 identities we have covered? What does each mean for us?

*Memory Verse of the Week – Romans 6:23*

#### **Bibliography**

Foxe, John. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (Pure Gold Classics). Gainesville, Florida: Bridge-Logos, 2001.