

The Final Countdown – One World Religion

Part 6

“Well hey, recently, apparently, Jon asked his wife Ruth what she’d like for her birthday. And so Ruth said, “I’d love to be eight again.”

And so on the morning of her birthday, Jon rose early and made her a nice big bowl of Coco Pops, and then he took her off to the local theme park. What a day! He put her on every ride in the park: the Death Slide, the Wall of Fear, the Screaming Monster Roller Coaster, every thing there was.

And then five hours later she staggered out of the theme park and her head was reeling and her stomach felt upside down. But right away, they journeyed to a McDonald’s where her loving husband Jon ordered her a Happy Meal with extra fries and a refreshing chocolate shake.

Then it was off to the movies to see the latest Star Wars epic, get a hot dog, popcorn, all the Coke Ruth could drink, and of course her favorite M&M’s. What a fabulous adventure! It was awesome!

And so finally Ruth wobbled home with Jon and collapsed into her bed totally exhausted and Jon leaned over to his precious wife with a big smile and lovingly asked, Well, Dear, what was it like being eight again?”

And Ruth’s eyes slowly opened and she moaned, “I meant my dress size!”

And the moral of the story: Even when a man is listening, he’s still gonna get it wrong.”

And all the men said, “Amen! Preach it Preacher!” But seriously folks, how many of you can identify with Jon there? Sometimes you try really really hard to listen and do the right thing but you still get it wrong, don’t you? Well folks, believe it or not, did you know one day the whole planet’s going to do that? They say, “Oh yeah, we’re listening to God and all

His warnings about a 7-year Tribulation,” but they’re not. And so one day they too going on a horrible ride. And that’s all begins at the rapture of the Church! And folks, the reason why it’s going to be such a **horrible time** is because for those who refuse to accept Jesus Christ as their Personal Lord and Savior, they will be catapulted into the 7-year Tribulation, and it’s not a joke. It’s an outpouring of God’s wrath on a wicked and rebellious planet. In fact Jesus said in **Matthew 24** it’s going to be a “time of greater horror than anything the world has ever seen or will ever see again. And that “unless that time of calamity is shortened, the entire human race will be destroyed.” But praise God, God’s not only a God of wrath, He’s a God of love as well. And **because He loves you and I**, He’s given us many warning signs to show us when the Tribulation was near and when Jesus Christ’s 2nd Coming was rapidly approaching.

Therefore, in order to keep you and I here at Sunrise from experiencing the ultimate bad day of being left behind, even worse than Jon Gibson helping you become eight again, we’re going to continue in our series **The Final Countdown**. And so far we’ve already seen how the **#10** sign on **The Final Countdown** was **The Jewish People**. The **#9** sign was **Modern Technology**. The **#8** sign was **Worldwide Upheaval**. The **#7** sign was **The Rise of Falsehood**. The **#6** sign was **The Rise of Wickedness**. The

#5 sign was **The Rise of Apostasy**. And the **last five times** we saw how the #4 sign was the Rise of **A One World Religion**. And what we saw there was that God lovingly foretold you and I that when we see **all the world's religions** on the planet coming together as one, which is happening right now today all over the world, thanks in part to the Lie of the **Interfaithism**, the lie of **Ecumenicalism** and the last time **two times** with the Rise of a **Global Persecution** of God's people. And what we saw the Bible clearly says that there's really going to come a time when the whole world is actually going to hate you and even want to kill you just for being a follower of Jesus. And folks, once again, that time, is **now!** We already saw it's happening through the lies of **Propaganda**, the examples of **Persecution**, the **Plan** already being in place and the **Implementation** already beginning with beheading. And so the point was this. We better get united, we better stop beating each other up, and we better start getting motivated because it's only going to get worse! We need each other! Turn to somebody and say, "I need you man!"

But that's still not all. The **5th way** we know we're headed for this **Global Persecution** of Christians is that **The Excuse is Already Here**. And folks, I'm here to tell you that ultimate excuse is the Homosexual Movement. But don't take my word for it. Let's listen to God's.

Romans 1:18-32 “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – His eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – Who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”

Now folks, if you ever wanted to know why America is going down the tubes so fast, here it is. We’re following the same path the Roman society did. And notice what it was. They first turned to an evolutionary mindset and said there was no God even though there was plenty of evidence

of God's existence through His Creation. This is called Intelligent Design and design in something implies Designer, but you turned a blind eye to it with your supposed Wise Scientific Evolutionary Mindset and so God did what? He gave them over to what? **Sexual impurity** and they started to degrade themselves. And then because they refused to repent and turn around and acknowledge God even after that judgment, they what? God gave them over again to **shameful lusts**. This time it was with Homosexuality and Lesbianism, right? Says it right there in the text. And then what happened after that? You still refused to retain the knowledge of God, so now what? Now things got really dark. God gave them over to a **depraved mind** to do what ought not to be done. Evil, greed, slander, murder, strife, gossip, God-hating people who actually invented ways of doing evil and even approve of those who do such things! Does that sound familiar or what? That's America! Ever since 1960 that's what's happened to us. We've followed the same path and we're reaping the same destruction. We're under the wrath of God just like the Roman Society!

And so here's the point with you and I today. Whether you realize it or not, this Homosexual Movement that has appeared on the scene in the Last Days after rejecting God through the lie of Evolution in our schools and society is not only starting to be approved by people, just like the text said it

would be in the Last Stage of Total Destruction of a Society, BUT it's this movement and the "approval" of it that's become the ultimate excuse to get rid of Christians. And the excuse is not called a HATE CRIME. In other words, if you don't approve of their behavior you are saying you hate them and that is now being considered a crime that is not just punishable by fines, but jail time. And it's not only happening here in America but around the world. Let me show you what I mean.

CWNews.org with George Thomas and Wendy Griffith

Thomas: A new hate crimes law raises disturbing questions about freedom of speech and religion in the United States. Hello everyone. I'm George Thomas.

Griffith: And I'm Wendy Griffith. This week President Barack Obama signed hate crimes legislation into law. Later, he hosted a reception at the White House for gay rights supporters.

Barack Obama: "We must stand against crimes that are meant not only to break bones but to break spirits. Not only to inflict harm but to instill fear."

Griffith: The new law expands Federal Hate Crimes legislation to include homosexuals. Gay activists have been pushing for this for nearly a decade and Democrats attached the measure to an unrelated defense spending bill. Opponents are afraid the new law threatens freedom of religion and speech. Here's Jennifer Whishon from Washington.

Jennifer: Despite added language meant to strengthen free speech protections for Christians who preach biblically held beliefs against homosexuality. Many Republicans fear it is not enough.

Rep. Mike Pence: Whatever language they added has an "escape hatch" and we know from experience at the State level and around the globe, that this represents a real infringement on the 1st Amendment-Freedom of Religion,

freedom of expression of Americans.

Griffith: Many predict the new law could land Christians in jail.

Rep. Mike Pence: If you aid or abet or induce in the commission of a Federal crime, you're guilty of that crime. And so as the scenario goes, someone could preach a sermon out of Romans chapter one for instance, about sexual practices and if someone was inspired by malevolent intent, in some way to go out and commit an act of violence-that pastor, that minister, that priest could be held liable under existing Federal law."

Oh, and don't think it's going to stop with just the Pastor...it's going to be ANY Christian. And that's because statistics say that, "Fewer and fewer in the U.S. see Homosexuality as a sin." Gee I wonder why? Churches aren't preaching on it. In fact, Churches are not only not preaching on it, they're "accepting it" and "condoning it" just like the text said they would. They're actually saying, "Homosexuality is a Gift not a Sin," which reminds me of what A.W. Tozer said, "This version of the Christian Religion is not transforming people; rather it is being transformed by the people. It is not raising the moral level of society; it is descending to the society's level, and congratulating itself as if it scored a victory when society is actually smiling accepting its surrender." As well as destroying our Nation like the text said it would. In fact, Rob Bell who we talked about before, not only denies hell, but he's now come out and said, "Those who oppose homosexual marriage are **narrow** Christians and need to **repent**." And if you don't "repent" you're going to have to. Right now Churches in the UK are fearful they are

going to be “forced” to have to perform “same sex marriages” and one man who has opposed it is facing losing his home. Another British Christian couple is being told they **can’t adopt** because they oppose homosexuality and another preacher in England HAS been arrested for saying homosexuality is a sin. It’s already begun. In fact, right now here in America there’s a Bill out there that is seeking to “deny the tax-exempt status” of any group that opposes Gay Marriage, and a recent report came out that says, “Those who oppose Gay Marriage are now considered Domestic Hate Groups.” You know, dangerous people who need to get rid of. And again. just like the text said, once you go down this route, you will not only destroy your nation, but things will progressively get worse and worse.

And I’m telling you, this Homosexual Movement is not only being used right now to silence Christians and get rid of Christians, but it’s going to open up the floodgates to all kinds of destructive behaviors like the text said that will further bring down our Nation even faster!

“One Church Bishop warned that all this ongoing redefinition of marriage with same sex unions will soon include the idea of what’s being called, “non-monogamy” or the concept of faithfulness between a man and a woman in marriage being outdated. The new concept will be the acceptance of “multiple partners” without the stigma of adultery. In fact, a court case has already been brought forth claiming that since same-sex marriage restrictions are being lifted, so should restrictions on multiple-partner marriages.”

“One California Congresswoman right now wants to “federalize” a state law to prohibit counseling to change a person’s sexual orientation, even if the person requests it. The Bill says this would be “dangerous and harmful.” Now the problem is, the language in the Bill is so broad and vague, that it could also include all forms of sexual orientation including pedophilia,” and that “If pedophilia is a sexual orientation, then that means that discrimination laws also apply to pedophiles. Which means you cannot block a pedophile from being a preschool teacher or any other high-risk occupation.”

Gee, that doesn’t sound good for our country! But folks, do you see? Just like the text said, once you go down this route and approve of a behavior that God condemns, it destroys your society. Things progressively get worse. But it get’s even worse than that! The IRONY of this Hate Crime law is that we true Christians are not advocating any “hate” or “violence” or “bodily harm” to anyone who is involved in homosexuality or lesbianism, and shame on anyone who says they’re a born again Christian and they do! Knock it off you’re giving the rest of us a BAD NAME, and you’re making it easier for them to pass these laws! However, lest there be any doubt that the homosexual movement really isn’t just about equality, but rather the removal of Christians and the rights to FREE SPEECH in America, let’s take a look at what their real agenda is.

“This is the Gay Manifesto by Michael Swift first published in Gay Community News February 15-21st in 1987. It is also reprinted in the Congressional Record. This is what it states:

We shall sodomize your sons, emblems of your feeble masculinity, of your shallow dreams and vulgar lies. We shall seduce them in your schools, in

your dormitories, in your gymnasiums, in your locker rooms, in your sports arenas, in your seminaries, in your youth groups, in your movie theater bathrooms, in your army bunkhouses, in your truck stops, in your all male clubs, in your houses of Congress, wherever men are with men together. Your sons shall become our minions and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image.

All laws banning homosexual activity will be revoked. Instead, legislation shall be passed which engenders love between men.

All homosexuals must stand together as brothers; we must be united artistically, philosophically, socially, politically and financially. We will triumph only when we present a common face to the vicious heterosexual enemy.

If you dare to cry faggot, fairy, queer, at us, we will stab you in your cowardly hearts and defile your dead, puny bodies...

We will unmask the powerful homosexuals who masquerade as heterosexuals. You will be shocked and frightened when you find that your presidents and their sons, your industrialists, your senators, your mayors, your generals, your athletes, your film stars, your television personalities, your civic leaders, your priests are not the safe, familiar, bourgeois, heterosexual figures you assumed them to be. We are everywhere; we have infiltrated your ranks. Be careful when you speak of homosexuals because we are always among you; we may be sitting across the desk from you; we may be sleeping in the same bed with you....All churches who condemn us will be closed. Our only gods are handsome young men...For us too much is not enough....All males who insist on remaining stupidly heterosexual will be tried in homosexual courts of justice and will become invisible men.

We shall rewrite history, history filled and debased with your heterosexual lies and distortions.

We shall be victorious because we are fueled with the ferocious bitterness of the oppressed who have been forced to play seemingly bit parts in your dumb, heterosexual shows throughout the ages. We too are capable of firing guns and manning the barricades of the ultimate revolution. Tremble, hetero swine, when we appear before you without our masks.

HAVE YOU HEARD OR READ THIS ARTICLE BEFORE? WHY NOT?"

I'll tell you why. Because then the REAL MOTIVE would be exposed. If ever there was a HATE CRIME that was it! I'm not advocating "hate" or "violence" or "bodily harm" to you, but by your own words, that's exactly what your agenda is to me & my family & to my Church & to my Country! Folks, we better wake up! This movement is not only bringing down our nation and incurring the wrath of God in the Last Days, but it's being used to silence the Church and get rid of Christians in the Last Days! And that's exactly what the Bible said would happen, when you are living in the Last Days! And it's happening now!

But that's still not all. The **6th way** we know we're headed for a **Global Persecution** of Christians is that **The Execution is Already Here**. Even here in America. Let's see what lies ahead, even for us. We're not safe.

Revelation 7:9,13-14,16-17 "After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. Then one of the elders asked me, 'These in white robes – who are they, and where did they come from?' I answered, 'Sir, you know.' And he said, 'These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'"

Now folks, once again, the people spoken about here being martyred during the 7-year Tribulation and being given these white robes are the people who got saved **after** the rapture, and again, the lesson is you should've gotten saved **before** the rapture and the hammer came down! But once again, now you're going to pay with it for a price, and that price is you're going to be martyred and killed. And again, notice the text. Where did these people come from? From just one part of the world? No! From every nation, tribe, people and language. A great multitude that no one could count, right? And logically, this would include America, right?

And so the question for us today is, "Do we see any signs of this Global Persecution of God's people even here in America where they actually want to kill us and martyr us?" Uh yeah, it's already begin! You put all these things together that we've been silent on, the Propaganda, the Plans, the Excuse, etc., and it's already happening here in America folks, much faster than I think we want to realize. Let's take a look at just how bad it's got right here in our own territory!

- In recent decades, the Bible, prayer, and Ten Commandments were taken out of the schools.
- The U.S. Supreme Court ordered the end of school sponsored religious activities, such as prayers during morning announcements.
- Lawyers are asking that the Bible be placed on the list of books considered dangerous for children.
- Requests have been made to do away with the Pledge of Allegiance because of its mention of God.

- The sharing of the gospel is now being equated as a form of “mental manipulation.”
- The ACLU put pressure on a town to remove the fish symbol from its official logo calling it a “secret sign of Christianity.”
- Tourists visiting Washington D.C. were ordered by police to stop praying in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.
- Arizona children were told they could not pray in front of the Supreme Court building.
- A minister was arrested for praying on the steps of the Supreme Court.
- A Texas Public School curriculum is teaching students to not only design a Socialist Flag but say that Christianity is a cult.
- Which explains why a professor in Florida recently made his students stomp on a piece of paper with the word Jesus written on it.
- A chaplain was fired for speaking the name of Jesus.
- Police Chaplains are being told to stop praying in the Name of Jesus.
- A North Carolina Pastor was fired as the honorary chaplain of the State House of Representatives after he closed the prayer in the Name of Jesus.
- A North Carolina court ruled that “Jesus prayers” can be banned.
- A North Carolina school ordered a child to remove God from their poem.
- A teacher is facing suspension for sharing a verse from the Bible.
- A graduate student in Georgia was given the choice to give up her Christian beliefs or be expelled from the graduate program.
- A New Mexico Court of appeals says states can require Christians to violate their faith.
- Vanderbilt University says that a Christian Club cannot require leaders to be devout Christians.
- Gideon Bibles are starting to be removed from Hotels.
- A Texas woman was forced to cover up her t-shirt that said, “Vote the Bible.”
- A Pastor was sentenced to two years in prison for teaching that parents should spank their children.
- A group called Military Bibles a threat to National Security.
- Senior Citizens are not allowed to pray for meals at a particular nursing home.
- A Christian was recently fined and sentenced to 60 days in jail for holding a home Bible study in his home in Arizona.
- Another Pastor in California was jailed for exercising a peaceful, pro-life speech.

- And Police were called to a Middle School in Lexington, Kentucky to stop 8th graders from praying during their lunch break for a student whose mother was tragically killed.
- A home school mom in New Hampshire was ordered to stop home schooling her daughter because the little girl “reflected too strongly” her mother’s Christian faith.
- A Pastor in Kansas was convicted and fined for passing out Bibles by so-called “fellow Christians.” “The arresting officer said he was a Christian. The court judge said he was a Christian. The prosecutor said he was a Christian. The city attorney said he was a Christian. And four of the six jurors said they were Christian. And yet they convicted me for handing out free Bibles.”
- As one person stated, “It is illegal in U.S. public schools to read the Bible, but many states require that a Bible is provided for every convict in jail. So if the children can’t read the Bible in school, they’ll be able to read it when they get to prison.”
- But that’s not all. Christians are not only being persecuted here in America, they are also being killed.
- Rev. Fred Winters was murdered while preaching in his pulpit in Maryville, Illinois.
- Pro-life activist Jim Pullion was murdered in front of his granddaughter’s high school for showing the truth about abortion.
- And recently two street preachers were killed in the United States and a religious liberty group warned that, “Anti-Christian hostility is getting increasingly deadly” in the United States after two street preachers were shot and killed by a teenager who opposed their message. “The increasing demonization of Christians in our culture makes some feel its open season on Christians.” Gary Cass of the Christian Anti-Defamation Commission complained about a lack of interest in national media. “As of today, there are no national news organizations reporting this vicious murder of two innocent Christian men. Why? If two Muslims, or two feminists or two homosexuals were murdered, wouldn’t the media be all over it? These were two fine young men shot by another man for their Christian faith, yet the media does not seem to care.”

Gee, I wonder why? Maybe it’s because you’ve got an agenda and that agenda is to get rid of Christians all over the world, even here in

America, just like the Bible said. Folks, I don't know about you, but I'd say it's high time we stop beating each other up and start getting along and get motivated about what's really important because the hammer's about to come down! Amen? Turn to somebody one last time and say, "I need you man!"

Folks, what more does God have to do? This is not a game! This is real! He doesn't want us going into the 7-year Tribulation! And He certainly doesn't want us to go into HELL! And so that's why, out of love, He's given us these signs of a **One World Religion** and a **Global Persecution** to show us that the Tribulation is near, Christ's 2nd Coming is rapidly approaching.

And that's why Jesus Himself said:

Luke 21:28 "When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

People, like it or not, we are headed for **The Final Countdown**. And so the point is this. If you're here today and you're not a Christian, then I beg you, please, heed the signs...heed the warnings...give your life to Jesus now...because tomorrow may be too late. Yes, you might have to suffer for being a Christian in this world, but it's nothing compared to **suffering in hell forever!** Take the way out through Jesus Christ today and God will wipe away every tear from your eye!

But again, if you're here today and you are a Christian, then don't be discouraged by these statistics! You should be motivated and excited! Why? Because Church History has shown that when persecution hits the Church it's a **good thing** the Church! Why? Because number one it teaches us the Church to never give up hope! As J. Vernon McGee says, "God is still on the throne!" And as long as He is on the Throne, there is Hope people!" Retreat is not an option! We just need to keep moving forward even against all odds like our Founding Fathers did. Let's see what they were up against!

- During the Revolutionary War, only 3 percent of the people actually fought against Great Britain.
- Only 10 percent of the citizens actively supported that 3 percent.
- Approximately 20 percent considered themselves to be on the side of the Revolution, but they did not actively participate.
- Toward the climatic end of the war, approximately 30 percent actually fought on the side of the British.
- The rest of the citizens had no disposition either way. They didn't care. They didn't want anything to do with what they deemed to simply be a political issue.

But guess what? They still won! They whooped the biggest power on the planet! Why? Because the Founding Fathers had a motto they believed in and that was "No king but King Jesus." And they believed that God would honor that and He did! And if our country is going to prosper again today then we've got to get that same motto back! "No king but King Jesus!" in America. We have to stop compromising with a Globalist or flirt with a

Mormon and stand on God's principles if we're ever going to see the same results! And yes, **it can still happen today!** Just ask the President of Uganda!

“President Yoweri Museveni celebrated Uganda's 50th anniversary of independence from Britain at the National Jubilee Prayers event by publicly repenting of his personal sin and the sins of the nation. Here's what He said:

‘I stand here today to close the evil past, and especially in the last 50 years of our national leadership history and at the threshold of a new dispensation in the life of this nation. I stand here on my own behalf and on behalf of my predecessors to repent. We ask for your forgiveness.

We confess these sins, which have greatly hampered our national cohesion and delayed our political, social and economic transformation. We confess sins of idolatry and witchcraft, which are rampant in our land. We confess sins of shedding innocent blood, sins of political hypocrisy, dishonesty, intrigue and betrayal.

Forgive us of sins of pride, tribalism and sectarianism; sins of laziness, indifference and irresponsibility; sins of corruption and bribery that have eroded our national resources; sins of sexual immorality, drunkenness and debauchery; sins of unforgiveness, bitterness, hatred and revenge; sins of injustice, oppression and exploitation; sins of rebellion, insubordination, strife and conflict.’

Next, the president dedicated Uganda to God saying, ‘We want to dedicate this nation to you so that you will be our God and guide. We want Uganda to be known as a nation that fears God and as a nation whose foundations are firmly rooted in righteousness and justice to fulfill what the Bible says in Psalm 33:12: ‘Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. A people You have chosen as Your own.’”

Folks, don't ever give up hope! There's always hope! God is on the Throne! Never give up, never surrender, and never quit! But that's not all.

The second benefit that persecution has upon the Church is that it Cleans Up the Church, like these guys did.

“One day a 2,000 member Baptist church was filled to overflowing one Sunday morning. And on this day, the preacher was just about ready to start the sermon when two men, dressed in long black coats and black hats entered thru the rear of the church.

Then one of the two men walked to the middle of the church while the other one stayed at the back. Then all of a sudden, both of them reached under their coats and pulled out automatic weapons.

And the one in the middle shouted, ‘Everyone willing to take a bullet for Jesus stay in your seats!’

Well, naturally, the pews emptied fast, followed by the choir. Then all the deacons ran out followed by the choir director and even the assistant Pastor.

And in just a few moments, there were only about 20 people left sitting in the Church with the Pastor holding steady in the pulpit.

Then all of a sudden, the men put their weapons away and said, gently, to the preacher, ‘Okay Pastor, all the hypocrites are gone. You can start the service now.’”

That’s what persecution does. It cleans up the Church. It gets rid of all the fake phony Christians who won’t take a stand for Jesus, the sheep and the goats, the wheat and the tares that the Bible talks about. And when the fake ones go, it cleans up the Church and **strengthens** the Church, **purifies** the Church and then **amazing things** start to take place in the Church. Why? Because when a Church gets its heart right with God, and when the chaff gets all removed, the Church starts to unite, believe, and pray. And when a

Church is unites, believes, and prays, even today, miracles abound, and **that's when** the captives are finally set free, like Alexander. We'll close in prayer after this. Let's be this Church this year!

Soviet Gulag: Alexander Ogoradnikov

The following is a true account of one man's struggle to survive imprisonment in the Soviet Gulag.

<showing man in arm and leg shackles being walked by two prison guards>

His crime....choosing to follow Jesus Christ.

Alexander Ogoradnikov: "The hunger continues. Not just for days, months, years. You cannot get rid of it. The other continual feeling is the constant cold. Terrible cold. Sometimes I felt as if my blood circulation was slowing down. I was personally amazed at the power of endurance, because by all accounts, I should have become seriously ill and died a long time ago."

Northern Siberia:

<re-enactment of Alexander being thrown in Siberian prison by KGB>

Alexander: "One night, I was thrown into a cell with a broken window. The KGB was determined to an experiment and freeze me. Later they would say, 'He broke the window in the cell and died of cold.' I felt despair. I thought to myself, 'Has God really left me? Am I really forgotten and neglected? Have my years of suffering been in vain?' And in my despair I began to pray. I usually pray silently, but this time I started to appeal to God out loud. 'God, have you left me?' My cries were bursting from my heart literally in utter despair."

Woman: One night I had a dream. In my dream, I was told to pray for Alexander. I had no idea who Alexander was but I told my church and we began to pray for him.

Alexander: "And right then, I suddenly felt a palpable physical warmth. Not the kind that comes from a heater, but like when a mother draws her freezing child to her breast and warms him with her tearful breath of compassion. It

was a very living human warmth. It penetrates you, as if piercing you to the heart. And inside your heart, a spring opens up out of which flows peace. A wonderful, magnificent, soothing peace. I felt a very loving brotherly touch. Someone's caring hand touching my shoulder. I actually felt it and this gesture represented the words, 'You are not alone. You are not abandoned. We are with you. We are sharing your suffering'. This warmth was the energy God gave me to feel physically the heat of prayer with my own skin. My own being. As if the prayers converted the energy of love into the energy of warmth."

<door to prison opens and two guards enter>

Alexander: "In the morning, it was a shock to my executioners. They couldn't understand. I wasn't simply alive but my temperature was the same as that of a normal person. I heard the doctor explaining to my executioners in the corridor, 'This is impossible. We can't explain it.'"

Woman: "About six months later, we received a letter from Open Doors, to pray for Alexander. And we finally found out who this Alexander was. We had been praying for six months without knowing anything about him. Alexander had started a Christian movement that spread across the Soviet Union. For this crime against the State, he was imprisoned to a Labor Camp in Northern Siberia. The death sentence zone."

Alexander: It so happens that many people began praying for me and that's exactly when they released me.

Alexander was "unexpectedly" released with no explanation.

Alexander: "Prayer opened the prison doors and as the scripture confirms, 'Set the captives free.'"

Believe in the power of prayer. Believe and pray."

To find the way to God, to understand the *truth* of God's Word, and to received the gift of eternal *life*, begin by repentance and faith through a prayer like this:

“Dear God, I understand that I have broken Your Law and sinned against You. Please forgive my sins. Thank You that Jesus suffered on the cross in my place. I now place my trust in Him as My Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”
