

Fighting for Christ - by Lorelei Pepe

We live in a world today where "taking care of ourselves" seem to be the first priority in our mind each day. We wake up and don't give our faith a second thought. But there are still many people worldwide today who are fighting for religious freedom every day of their lives.

One of them is a woman named Mariam Yahia Ibrahim. Known as Miriam, she is a Sudanese religious freedom activist and fighter for Christ. Married to a Christian man, she was put in a Sudanese prison in 2014. Miriam was sentenced to death for refusing to renounce her Christian faith. She was 27 then and the mother of 2 children. She spent her time in prison, often in isolation and chains. She was facing execution.

Luckily with the intervention of the BBC who launched a high profile campaign, she was released and eventually came to America. This was the only charge they had against Miriam. She was willing to die for her commitment to Christ. The Sudanese law still believes in the death penalty today and does execute people. Miriam still does public speaking today talking about her past and her beliefs.

Another fighter for freedom in faith was Jesus and his followers - his disciples. They were ordinary men called to follow him and spread the gospel throughout the world. But many suffered hard deaths for their beliefs too. According to tradition, 11 of the 12 disciples suffered a martyr's death. Philip was hanged and Andrew crucified on an X-shaped cross. Peter was crucified upside down when he was in Rome. It goes on and on. Only John who was exiled to Patmos survived a horrific death.

These men are all role models for us, but we simply dismiss what they went through. They left their former lives and lived simply but they were convicted in what they preached long after Jesus died. History shows us they had unbeatable faith and dedication and commitment, just like Miriam.

This is a reminder to never to forget that Jesus was here for a real reason, and to this day is still remembered as our Lord and master. We must have the same confidence and commitment in our faith to spread the gospel like these who did in the past. Jesus never fails, and whoever believes in him shall have eternal life in another world above. Jesus said in John 11:25, whoever believes in me though he may die, he shall live". He is the resurrection and the Life. Think of him first thing in the morning and pray. Watch how he will change your life.