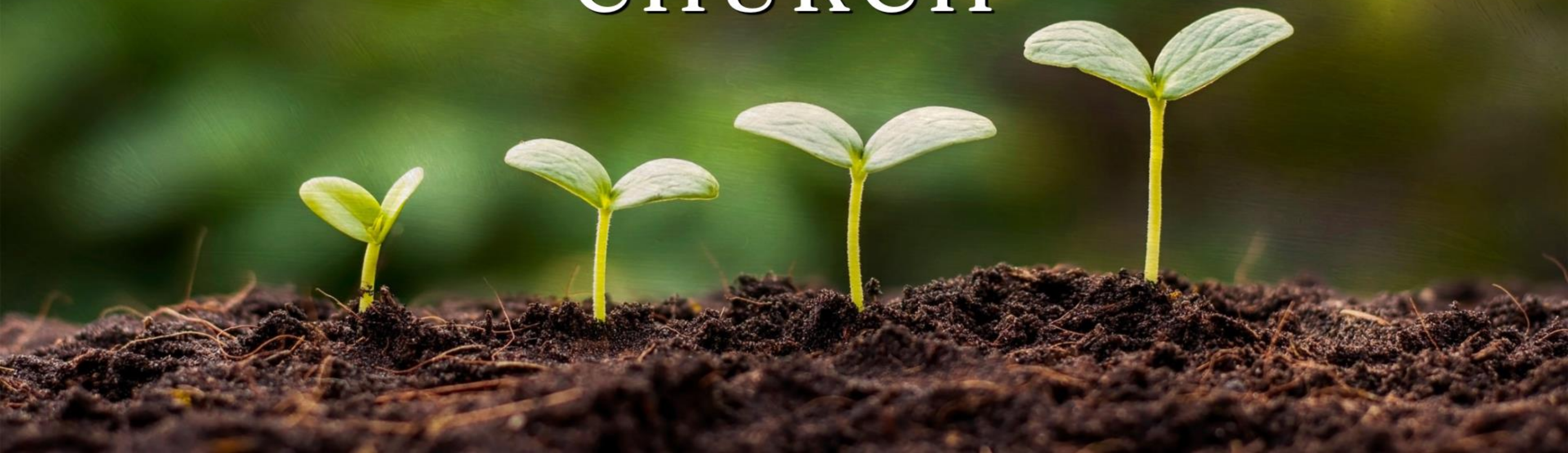


THE
MATURING
CHURCH



The Maturing Church...

Perseveres

Gal. 6:9

The Maturing Church series

- *Grows*
 - *Serves*
 - *Evangelizes*
 - *Tithes*
 - *Gives*
 - *Worships*
 - *Loves*
 - *Connects*
 - *Discerns*
- These are the *inevitable by-products* of spending time with the Lord.
 - They are the fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit in us!

The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

Perseverance:

The capacity to endure present hardship, suffering, persecution or attack because of a firm belief in future reward or benefit

Gal. 6:9; James 1:12

The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

1. During Persecution from the world

- John 15:20 “If they hated me, they’ll hate you”
- John 16:33 “...you WILL have trouble”
- Matt. 5:10-11 “others will persecute you”
- Matt. 10:22 “you will be hated... for my name”

The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

2. During Attacks from the Enemy

- Eph. 6:11-12 “against the schemes of the devil”
- 1 Th. 2:18 “Satan hindered us”
- Rev. 2:10 “...the devil is about to throw you...”
- Rev. 12:17 “...to make war on her offspring

The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

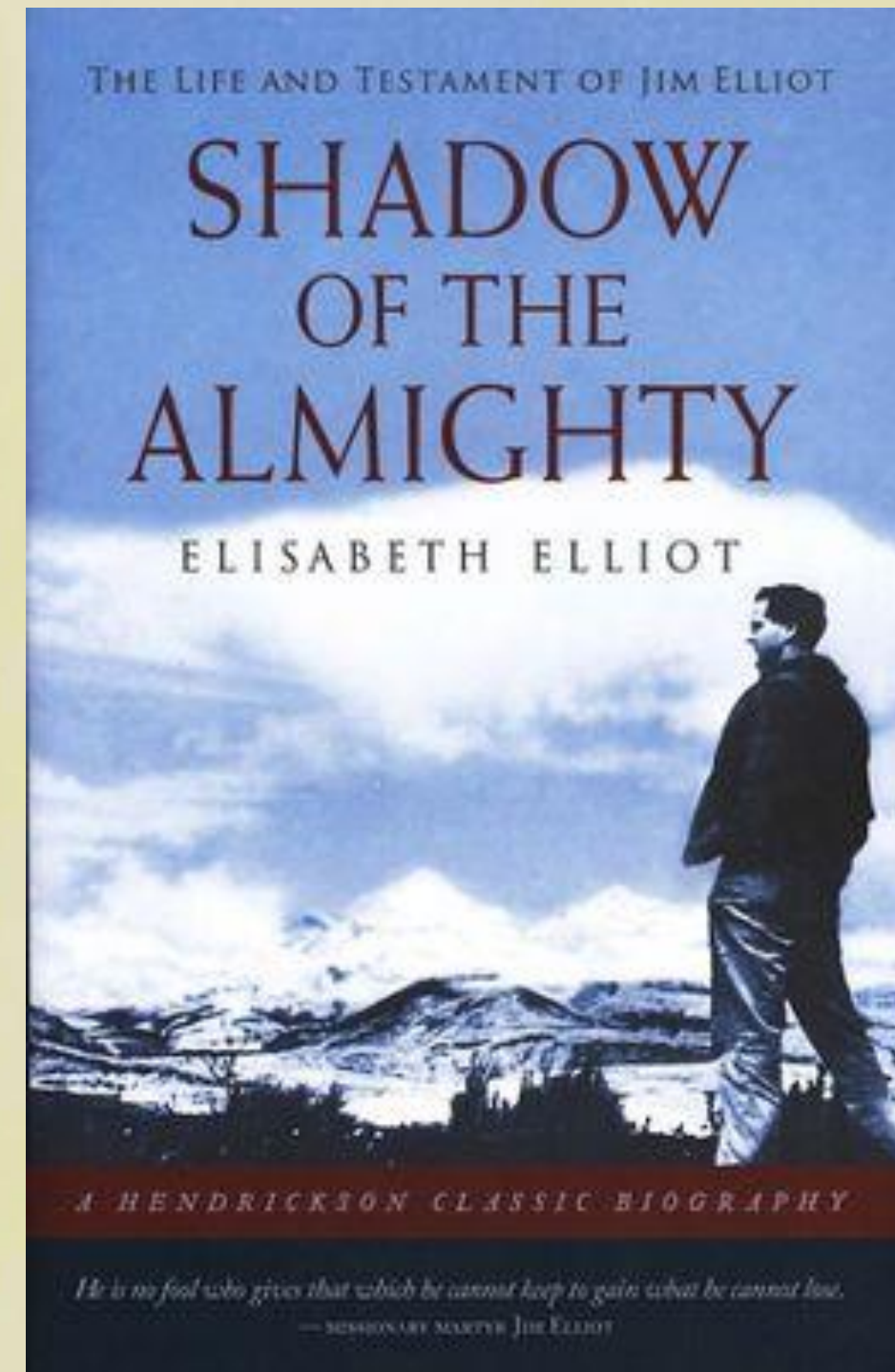
3. During Threats of Physical violence/attack

- Matt. 5:39 “if anyone slaps you ...”
- Rom. 8:35 “persecution...danger...sword?”
- Rom. 12:21 “...overcome evil with good”
- 2 Co. 4:8-9 “hard-pressed...struck down”

The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

HOW do we persevere?

- (1) Make your mind up NOW
 - a. Josh 24:15
 - b. Dan. 3:1-23
 - c. Rev. 12:11



The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

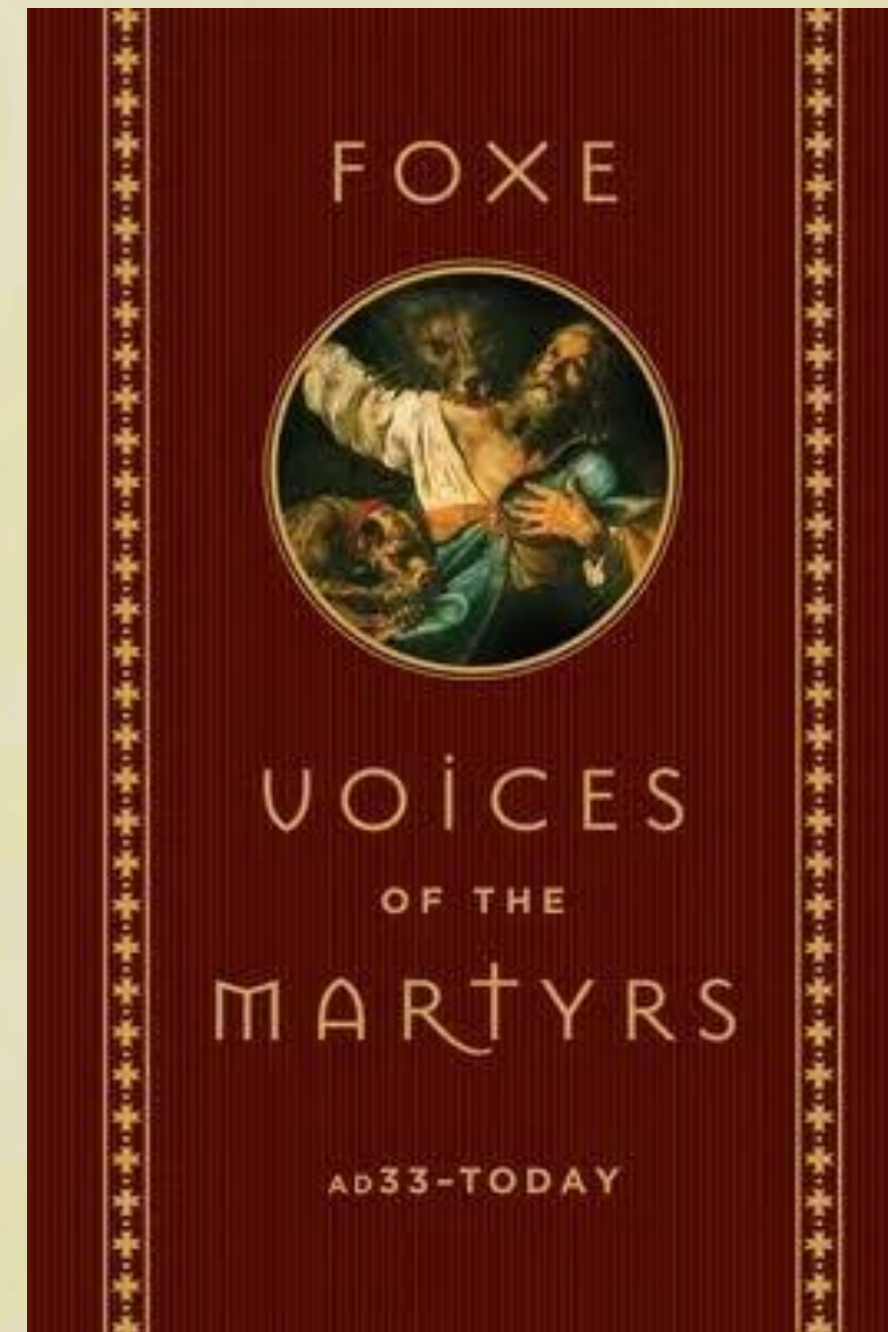
HOW do we persevere?

- (2) Identify the ways the Enemy attacks you
 - a. 1 Pe. 5:8-9 he is looking for people to “devour”
 - b. *Do you Persevere in temptation, or fold?*

The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

HOW do we persevere?

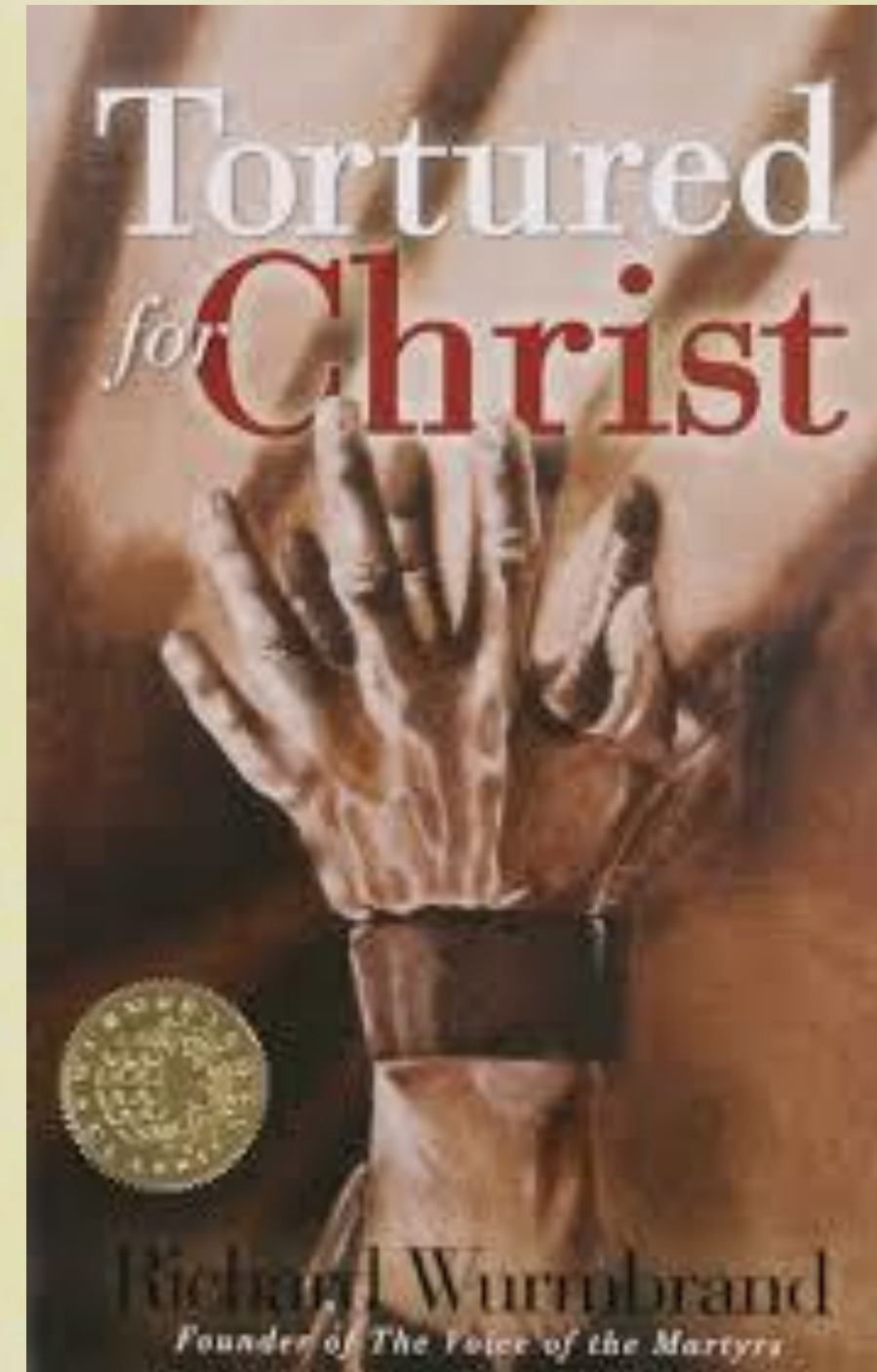
- (3) Celebrate others who have persevered
 - a. Mark 13:13
 - “...endure to the end”
 - All 12 disciples!



The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

HOW do we persevere?

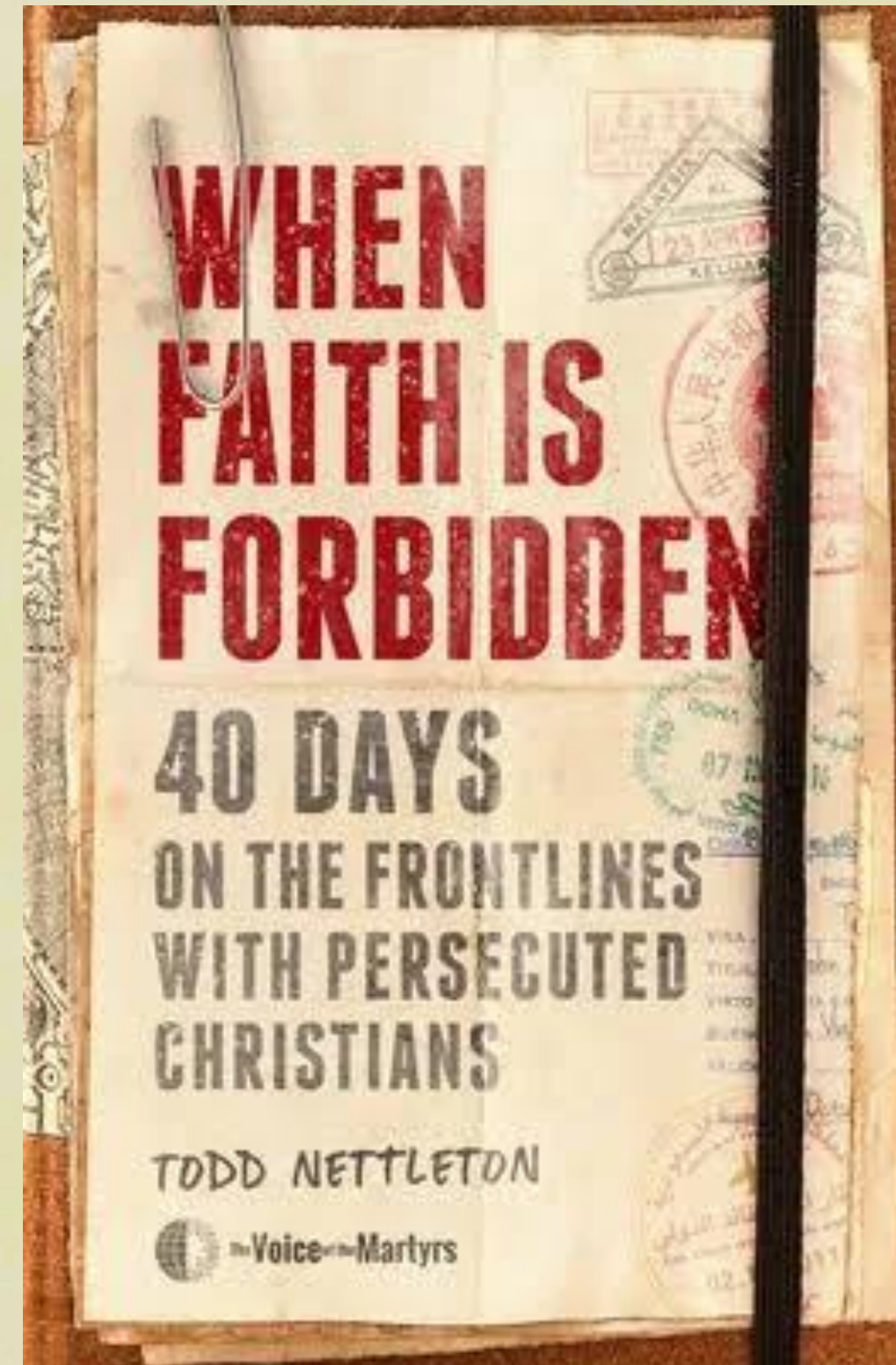
- (3) Celebrate others who have persevered
 - Martyrs throughout church history



The Maturing Church ... *Perseveres*

HOW do we persevere?

- (3) Celebrate others who have persevered
 - Persecuted believers in the world today



“ *Persecution is like fire,” he told me. “I use the word like ‘purify’. If we want pure gold, we have to let it go through fire. The blessing of persecution for the church is that when we are facing the difficulties, the serious believers will stay. So, it doesn’t matter what happens*

Mr. Xi, pp. 142-144

“ *Persecution leaves the church full of believers serious about their faith – serious enough that threats of physical pain can’t keep them from meeting. Those who are there only because it’s “cool” quickly fall away... It is a privilege to suffer for Christ who suffered for us.* ”

Prayer Challenges:

- 1. Where is God calling you to persevere in the midst of hardship, difficulty or attack?
- 2. Under what circumstances might you be pressed to deny Christ?
- 3. How does hearing and learning about those who have persevered in persecution encourage you as a Believer?