Chinese Authorities have arrested dozens of Christians in the latest crack down on the underground House Church movement. Around 23 Christians were arrested last month and charged with "using an evil cult to obstruct the law". Several of the Christians were later released after paying a fine, but Pastors Hang Geming and Sun Qingwen were sentenced to " re-education through labour " in a correctional facility in Jining City, Shandong province. Other Christian leaders are expected to receive a similar sentence...

Quote: *"It said the pastors had been sent to "Re-education through [the] Labor Camp of Jining City," of Shandong province. They began serving the sentence June 29 and were expected to be released June 14, 2008, at the earliest. Local Christians said in published remarks that both pastors were "evangelical missionaries" sent by their churches from Henan province to Shandong. They were reportedly detained June 15 along with four other local church leaders when they had a worship service. The four local pastors were released on July 1 after being forced to pay a 10000 yuan ($1300) fine, CAA said.*

Last July Chinese authorities demolished a building that was erected by members of the House Church movement. The group had been unable to obtain a licence to build the property, as the state only recognizes denominations headed by the Chinese Communist party. The building was subsequently destroyed and dozens of Christians were also arrested, charged with "inciting a crowd to resist law enforcement".

The Scriptures tell us that we must "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God ", Acts 14:22. In the West we are able to worship God and to study the Scriptures without fear or intimidation, a freedom that is very much taken for granted here. But believers in Saudi Arabia, China, India, Pakistan and many other countries, face a daily threat of imprisonment, torture and even death for name of Jesus Christ. In the West we may not face the threat of communism, but with the new Alliance of Civilizations, eventually the world powers will clamp down on extremism in the West - including fundamentalist Christianity
. Perhaps we should cherish the freedoms we do enjoy while we still have them. Not that we should fear persecution, for the Lord is with us. And regarding our brothers and sisters in China, as Joseph said in the dungeon, "
think on me when it shall be well with thee
", Genesis 40:14.

Matthew 10:25-28
It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye

hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

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