



Bible Studies

The Cost of Following Jesus Study Three



Eti, Ratna and Rebekka

“The gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few”

Matthew 7:14

Ratna



Cost

- To require a specified expenditure, payment effort or loss
- To cause to lose, suffer or sacrifice

Key Scripture:

Mark 8:34 “Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

Activity: Discuss this Scripture in your group.

- o What was Jesus referring to?
- o What does it mean for us?
- o What does it mean for Christians in countries where persecution is common?

What did Jesus have to say about the cost of following him?

- Matthew 7:13 -14 – What is the road like?
- Luke 18:18-27 – Where might the cost be?
- Matthew 10:17-20 –What is the cost here and what is the promise?
- Matthew 10:22; Mark 13:13 – What treatment can Christians expect and what does God promise?
- Luke 12:53 – What did Jesus say would cause divisions within the family?

Imprisoned for their faith

For some who come to trust in Christ and determine to follow him no matter what – this decision means imprisonment.

The following is a story of three women who were imprisoned in Indonesia for teaching Muslim children in a Sunday School.

Three Indonesian Christian women, Dr Rebekka Zakaria, Eti Pangesti and Ratna Bangun, served two years in prison in the Indramayu district of West Java. They were wrongfully convicted under Indonesia’s Child Protection Act of trying to convert Muslim children to Christianity.

Rebekka, Eti and Ratna were separated from their families and loved ones as they served out their sentence. Ratna rarely saw her children as they were living with her sister’s family far away. Her little boy (then 3) kept crying “Mummy where are you? Please come home” Rebekka’s foster daughter traveled 60 km a day on her motorcycle to bring food to the women. Eti’s daughter, Esther, said, “I’m proud that she is in prison for standing up for the gospel.”

*“As for you,
you meant evil
against me; but
God meant it for
good.” Genesis 50:20*



*The back of Ratna's t-shirt!
The women celebrate their faith even in prison*

An Open Doors team visited the women in prison and found them to be in good spirits in spite of the hardships they faced. They shared that there were times when the separation from their children was almost unbearable but they also understood that the price they paid can also bring blessing.

In the prison there were 400 men and 12 women. The 9 other ladies were Muslims. The Open Doors team had a chance to meet with them also. They said that since Eti, Ratna and Rebekka had come they had all become friends ...before that they were hating and fighting with each other!

The women can say with Joseph, “As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good... Genesis 50:20.



Read 2 Tim 3:10-14

Paul outlines the cost to himself of following Jesus, and how God had rescued him. He then goes on to explain to Timothy what it could cost for him and how he can remain steadfast. Always there is hope – where there is a cost – there is also the very present help of the Lord Jesus with his people.

Join with Open Doors in supporting those who are persecuted for their faith,

**Keep up to date – visit the Open Doors website at
www.opendoors.org.au**

Prepared by Annie Cullen

Open Doors Australia
PO Box 6237
Frenchs Forest NSW 2086

T (02) 9451 2999
F (02) 9451 2988
E odaustralia@od.org
I www.opendoors.org.au



Open Doors
Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide