

Prayer Focus:

Prisoners & those in Bonds

According to Voice of the Martyrs, the first request that Christians facing persecution ask for is PRAYER!

- On Persecution.com, you can even adopt a worker and pray for them! Also go to icommittoprayer.com

According to Persecution.com in a 2020 article, approximately more than two hundred million Christians are facing high levels of persecution worldwide according to the latest report of [Open Doors USA](#).

Top 10 countries where it's hardest to follow Christ:

1. North Korea
2. Afghanistan
3. Somalia
4. Libya
5. Pakistan
6. Eritrea
7. Sudan
8. Yemen
9. Iran
10. India

Top 10 countries where Christians face the most violence:

1. Pakistan
2. Nigeria
3. Egypt
4. Central African Republic
5. Burkina Faso
6. Colombia
7. Cameroon
8. India
9. Mali
10. Sri Lanka

In seven out of the top 10 World Watch List countries, the primary cause of persecution is Islamic oppression. This means, for millions of Christians—particularly those who grew up Muslim or were born into Muslim families—openly following Jesus can have painful consequences. Christians in these countries can be treated as second-class citizens, discriminated against for jobs or even violently attacked.

The report notes how both China and India are increasingly using facial recognition systems with wide networks of cameras to track Christians and make their lives more difficult.

Top 10 countries where the most churches are attacked or closed:

1. China: 5,576
2. Angola: 2,000
3. Rwanda: 700
4. Myanmar: 204
5. Nigeria: 150
6. Ethiopia: 124
7. Burundi: 100
8. Mali: 100
9. Pakistan: 58
10. Burkina Faso: 50

Top 10 countries where the most Christians are martyred:

1. Nigeria: 1,350
2. Central African Republic: 924
3. Sri Lanka: 200
4. Democratic Republic of Congo: 152
5. South Sudan: 100
6. Burkina Faso: 50
7. Egypt: 23
8. Pakistan: 20
9. [name withheld]: 20
10. Colombia: 16

“But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled.” – 1 Peter 3:14

Data with respect to Christian persecution in the top 50 countries where it’s hardest to follow Christ:

- **260 Million:** In the top 50 [World Watch List](#) (WWL) countries alone, **260 million Christians** in the world experience high levels of persecution for their choice to follow Christ.
- **1 in 9:** Christians worldwide experience high levels of persecution.
- **2,983** Christians killed for faith-related reasons in the top 50 WWL countries.
- **9,488** churches or Christian buildings attacked in the top 50 WWL countries.
- **11** countries scoring in the “**extreme**” level for their persecution of Christians. Six years ago, North Korea was the only one.
- **19** Consecutive years North Korea has ranked No. 1 as the world’s most dangerous place for Christians.

Sources: opendoorsusa.org, factsandtrends.net

Scriptures to Stir Compassion & Pray

Hebrews 13:3 NLT Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies.

Matthew 25:35-40 NKJV ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I *was* naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.'

Isaiah 61:1 ESV The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

Psalm 69:33 HCSB

³³ For the LORD listens to the needy and does not despise His own who are prisoners.

Psalm 68:5-6 HCSB

⁵ God in His holy dwelling is a father of the fatherless and a champion of widows. ⁶ God provides homes for those who are deserted. He leads out the prisoners to prosperity,^[a] but the rebellious live in a scorched land.

We often do nothing because we don't think there is anything we can do. We need not hide our faces from suffering. We must use that compassion to stir up prayer. Prayer will move our Father.