

# Pray for persecuted Christians

'Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow-prisoners, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering' (Hebrews 13:3).



**release**  
international  
voice of persecuted christians

## NORTH AFRICA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 4-5*  
Pray for indigenous Christians who form a tiny minority in the Islamic nations of North Africa. Open Christian witness is often not possible, and many believers meet in secret.

## EGYPT

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
Christians in Egypt, who have been treated as second-class citizens and discriminated against in the areas of employment and education, face attacks from extremist elements. Pray especially for believers from a Muslim background, who are under the greatest pressures.

## ALGERIA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
In 2006 the government passed a presidential order that requires all non-Muslim groups to register and be officially approved in order to operate. Pray for wisdom for church leaders.

## NIGERIA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
12 northern states have imposed strict Sharia (Islamic law), and Christians face ongoing civil conflict in Plateau state. Pray for believers who have lost loved ones in the violence.



## MEXICO

*Religious Freedom Rating: 4*  
Pray for evangelicals in the southern state of Chiapas who face attacks from Caciques, powerful community chiefs who practise traditionalist religion - a semi-pagan mix of Roman Catholic beliefs and ancient Mayan religion.

## SUDAN

Following the formation of an independent South Sudan in July 2011, proposed implementation of Sharia (Islamic law) in Sudan will make life worse for the Christian minority already facing oppression there.



## CUBA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 6*  
Although the 1992 constitution guarantees freedom of religion, all religious groups must be registered. Most house churches are not registered, and are therefore considered illegal. Pray for reform of these laws.

## COLOMBIA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
Pray for evangelical Christians and pastors who face violence from paramilitary groups and those behind the huge trade in illegal drugs. Pray especially for churches in rebel-controlled areas.



## ERITREA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 7*  
The autocratic government has closed evangelical and Pentecostal churches, and imprisoned and tortured leaders and believers. Pray for the many Christians being detained.

## CENTRAL ASIA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 4-5*  
Pray for Christians who continue to face persecution in a number of states within the former Soviet Union. Pressure comes from both 'old guard' communists, and Islamic extremists.

## IRAN

*Religious Freedom Rating: 7*  
In this unique Islamic republic clerics wield ultimate political control. Open Christian witness to Muslims is banned, and government spies monitor Christian groups. Pray that the church will remain strong.

## CHINA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 6*  
Despite the growth of China's free market economy, religious freedoms remain severely curtailed. Pray for the unregistered, 'illegal' churches which continue to grow.



## AFGHANISTAN

*Religious Freedom Rating: 6*  
Pray for the tiny Christian church which faces many pressures, including opposition from the hard-line Islamic Taliban, and continuing economic and political instability.

## NORTH KOREA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 7*  
All Christian activity is forbidden, and being caught with a Bible can lead to execution in this repressive state. Pray especially for the estimated thousands of believers imprisoned in labour camps.



## BANGLADESH

*Religious Freedom Rating: 6*  
Pray for Christians in rural areas who face discrimination and sporadic violence in this predominantly Muslim nation. Pray for protection for Christians, and pray also for those who oppose the gospel.



## PAKISTAN

*Religious Freedom Rating: 6*  
Islamic law, and the 295C blasphemy laws, discriminate against non-Muslims. Pray for Christians who daily face discrimination in education, employment and the legal system.

## LAOS

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
Religious groups must gain state approval for evangelism, printing religious literature, and owning or building places of worship. Pray that the government will ease restrictions on the church.

## PHILIPPINES

Christians living in areas with significant influence from Muslim and Marxist guerrilla organisations have faced threats, kidnapping and death.

## MALDIVES

*Religious Freedom Rating: 7*  
This holiday destination in the Indian Ocean is one of the least evangelised nations on earth. There is a legal ban against any religion other than Sunni Islam. Pray that Christians have wisdom as they practise their faith.

## SAUDI ARABIA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 7*  
Pray for the church in Saudi Arabia, where all religions other than Islam are forbidden. Anyone involved in evangelism, or who converts a Muslim, faces jail, expulsion or execution.



## SRI LANKA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
In recent years militant Buddhists, who feel threatened by the growth of Christianity, have encouraged the destruction of churches, and attacks against individuals. Ask God to protect churches, especially in remote rural areas.

## BURMA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 7*  
The military junta rules Burma with an iron rod, and maintains control over all religious activity. Pray for the spread of God's Word - it is illegal to print or import Bibles in indigenous languages.

## VIETNAM

*Religious Freedom Rating: 6*  
The communist regime claims to uphold religious freedoms, yet continues to repress unregistered churches. Pray especially for believers among the Hmong and Montagnard people groups, who face the most intense persecution.

## INDIA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
Pray for all Christians and church leaders who have suffered violence at the hands of Hindu militants, who want a Hindu-only India. Several states have introduced anti-conversion laws. Pray these will not be used against Christians.

## INDONESIA

*Religious Freedom Rating: 5*  
Christians are marginalised in society, face legal obstructions to establishing churches and have been physically attacked when gathering to worship.



### ISLAMIC WORLD

Christians may face persecution from Islamist militants, and discrimination in employment and the legal system

### COMMUNIST WORLD

Christians may face persecution from 'old guard' Communists, and governments ideologically opposed to Christianity

### HINDU WORLD

Christians may face persecution from militant Hindus, and discrimination in the legal system

### BUDDHIST WORLD

Christians may face persecution from militant Buddhists, and legal/state discrimination

Christians may face persecution for various reasons

### RELIGIOUS FREEDOM RATING

The Religious Freedom Ratings shown above are taken from Paul Marshall's authoritative study *Religious Freedom in the World* (2007, Rowman & Littlefield). 1 is best, 7 is worst.

Please display this map in your home or church as a reminder to help you pray for persecuted Christians around the world.

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