

# Hotspots of Christian persecution

This map shows just some of the places where Christians suffer high levels of persecution. We hope this will help you to pray for our brothers and sisters.



## Afghanistan

When the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021 they gave Christians there three choices: leave, return to Islam, or be killed. Those who were able to fled. An unknown number, who will be killed if discovered, remain as secret believers.

## Saudi Arabia

Leaving Islam is punishable by death, meaning that those who convert to Christianity could be executed for their faith (though there have been no known executions for apostasy in recent times). The estimated million Christians who work as expats in Saudi Arabia face restrictions on worship and are prohibited from sharing their faith with Muslims.

## Nigeria

An estimated 45,000 Christians have been killed in Islamist violence across northern and Middle Belt Nigeria since 2009. There are mass graves throughout areas such as Kaduna and Plateau states, with no sign of any end to the violence.

## D. R. Congo

An estimated 5,500 Christians have lost their lives to Islamic State-affiliated militants since October 2017. The militants attack believers in the north-eastern states of Ituri and North Kivu, as well as launching armed assaults in western Uganda.

## Eritrea

Christians outside of Eritrea's three legally permitted denominations (Eritrean Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Lutheran) are often subject to arrest and imprisonment without trial. Believers, and especially church leaders, are subject to shocking mistreatment and abuse in Eritrea's prisons.



### Key prayer:

For Christians who are at constant risk of death if their faith is discovered.



### Key prayer:

For secret believers who may be killed by family or former friends, or arrested by the authorities, if discovered.



### Key prayer:

For the survival of the embattled Church in Nigeria, and that the Lord's people will continue to trust in Him through times of severe difficulty and hardship.



### Key prayer:

For an end to the persistent violence in north-eastern DRC.



### Key prayer:

That the Lord will sustain those suffering imprisonment and abuse for their faith in Him.

## China

Pressure is increasing on church leaders in China's official churches to conform their teaching to that of the Chinese authorities. Many Christians belong instead to unofficial congregations. In some areas these congregations are tolerated, but in others churches can be raided and closed down.

## North Korea

Praying, telling people about Jesus or owning a Bible are all examples of the "crimes" that can result in whole families being imprisoned and killed in North Korea. Christians in prisons and labour camps often receive even harsher treatment than other prisoners.

## Myanmar

Repression of Myanmar's ethnic-minority Christians (including the Chin, Kachin and Karen people) has continued for many decades. Hundreds of believers have been killed and thousands displaced by the Buddhist-nationalist Myanmar military since the beginning of a civil war in February 2021.

## Pakistan

Christians are a despised and marginalised minority in Muslim-majority Pakistan. One difficulty faced by believers is false accusations under Pakistan's notorious "blasphemy" laws. Such accusations can lead to mob violence and even the murder of Christians.

## Iran

Christian worship and evangelism is forbidden among Iran's Farsi (Persian)-speaking majority. Farsi-speaking believers are converts from Islam who are often arrested on charges of illegal evangelism or on dubious national security grounds. Iran's prisons are notorious for abuse and ill-treatment.



### Key prayer:

For Chinese church leaders to receive wisdom to navigate this difficult context and to lead Christ's people faithfully.



### Key prayer:

That the Lord will comfort and help believers who are enduring unimaginable abuse or torture at the hands of the North Korean authorities.



### Key prayer:

For bereaved, displaced and impoverished Christians, many of whom have lost all their earthly goods.



### Key prayer:

For Christians to be protected from extremists within the Muslim majority.



### Key prayer:

For the Lord to strengthen believers in prison, or those punished with other court-mandated restrictions.