



200 million Christians  
persecuted in 105 countries\*  
1 killed every 5 minutes\*  
Come and join us

\*US Centre for the study of Global Christianity

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Lisa Pearce from Open Doors says that, “If a Christian is discovered in Somalia, they’re unlikely to live to see another day”. The question to ask yourself is, “Why join a group experiencing 80% of the religious persecution in the world today? Especially when, in North Africa, the Middle East and many parts of Asia, Christians are vanishing. It seems a lost and futile cause.”

... but not according to Jesus – or his followers. Jesus said to all who’d follow him, ‘they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake.’ (Matthew 24:9). Thankfully, he also promised that nothing would overcome his church (Matthew 16:18). So, trusting in these comforting words, Christians await persecution with confidence, praying, that when it comes, they’ll be ready to stand strong and bear witness to their Lord. They know, from the promises of scripture and the lessons of history, that nothing strengthens faith like persecution unto death.

So why does God allow such persecution? Because when a lost world sees Christians preferring to die than dishonour their Lord – they see faith that’s real. And when Christians love their enemies – the world sees a miracle. Esther from Eritrea says, “As Christians we’re required to love our enemies even though it is very difficult to do that when they make you suffer, or when they harm or kill your loved ones!”

Sadly, not all Christians listen to Jesus’s commands. In every age there are people behaving badly in the name of Jesus. Even now, in the Central African Republic, “Christian” militias persecute and murder Muslims. But the unreported

truth is that religious persecution is utterly one sided. The vast majority of persecution between the world’s two largest religions is from Muslims towards Christians. So, if the secular media has given you an impression that all religious people just fight and kill each other then please reconsider.

The US Centre for the Study of Global Christianity (and other sources) estimates that 100,000 Christians are martyred annually - roughly 11 per hour, or 1 every 5 minutes. You can read or download a moving and tragic article about their methodology at:  
<https://tinyurl.com/k7822xo>

The following articles are exceptions to the media silence:  
<https://tinyurl.com/n6keu5t>                      <https://tinyurl.com/mq49qa9>  
<https://tinyurl.com/msa3wma>                      <https://tinyurl.com/qxsg2u4>

You can help persecuted Christians by supporting the Voice of the Martyrs and Open Doors.

Finally, dear friend, do not “fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both” (Jesus’s words in Matthew 10:28). Do not be deterred by reports of persecution but come and join us as we worship Jesus.

**Prayer:** Dear God please give hearts of lions to your people everywhere that they might stand firm for you.