



eternal perspective ministries

with author Randy Alcorn

How to help the Persecuted Church

Who is the “persecuted church”?



North Korea has been one of the most persecuted countries in the world for decades.

The best way to understand and help the persecuted church is to first become educated about who is being persecuted.

Each year Open Doors International releases the World Watch List, a detailed analysis of Christian persecution worldwide. In this free resource, countries are evaluated and ranked according to the severity of persecution that occurred in the past year. The World Watch List is a ranking of 50 countries

where persecution of Christians for religious reasons is worst. The list covers persecution of Christians of all denominations in the entire country. The focus is on persecution for the faith, not persecution for political, economic, social, ethnic or accidental reasons.

It is impossible to live openly as a Christian in Afghanistan. According to the Open Doors USA website, “Leaving Islam is considered shameful, and Christian converts face dire consequences if their new faith is discovered.”

It is illegal to be a Christian in North Korea. According to the Open Doors USA website, “If Christians are discovered, not only are they deported to labor camps as political criminals or even killed on the spot, their families will share their fate as well.”

The top ten countries for 2023:

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

The full World Watch List resource is available at <https://www.opendoorsus.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>

For more information, see also: Open Doors International www.opendoorsusa.org
Voice of the Martyrs www.persecution.com.



Books Randy recommends about China and persecution:

- *The Discovery of Genesis: How the Truths of Genesis were found Hidden in the Chinese Language* by C.H. Kang (and Nelson)
- *Refiner's Fire* by Sylvia Bambola (a novel)
- *Understanding China* by John Bryan Starr (secular but good information)
- *By Their Blood* by James & Marti Hefley
- *China: The Hidden Miracle* by Ross Paterson & Elisabeth Farell
- *Their Blood Cries Out* by Paul Marshall
- *The Coming Influence of China* by Carl Lawrence
- *Thirty Years in a Red House: A Memoir of Childhood and Youth in Communist China* by Xiao Di Zhu

For additional articles and resources on the persecuted church, visit our website at www.epm.org

What resources on persecution does Randy recommend?

After reading *Safely Home*, many people inquire about how to learn more about the persecuted church and how to help.

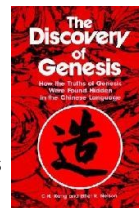
Randy collected many of his stories from **Voice of the Martyrs** and **The Bible League** newsletters. If you

don't subscribe to them, he would recommend you do so!



Intercessors for China publish a calendar to pray for the persecuted church. You can order one by calling them at 888-462-5481.

The book that explains the Chinese characters is by C.H. Kang and Ethel Nelson, called **The Discovery of Genesis**. You can order it from Amazon.com. Randy says it's fascinating!



Practical Ways to Help

We receive many letters from readers asking for ways to help those being persecuted for their faith. In addition to financial contributions, the following are other opportunities for individuals, families, or church groups to help those in need.

Blankets of Love

"Blankets of Love" is an opportunity to share a blanket with a Sudanese Christian who has suffered for the cause of Christ. Many Christian families in Sudan have lost all earthly possessions as they flee from Islamic persecution.

Nights in Sudan can be cold, and many children have to sleep on the bare ground. The simple gift of a blanket can be a great encouragement to your Sudanese brothers and sisters who are persecuted for their faith.

To sponsor a blanket for Sudan:

1. Select a good quality used blanket(s) from your home. (You may purchase new blankets if you desire.) Types of blankets: Cotton or synthetic, full or queen. Please no quilts, afghans, comforters, army, or electric blankets.
2. Add \$2.00 per blanket for handling and shipping to Sudan.
3. Send blankets now or anytime this year to:

"Blankets of Love," The Voice of the Martyrs, 510 SW Adeline, Bartlesville, OK 74003

Bibles Unbound

Today around the world, persecuted Christians are quietly gathering names and addresses. These addresses are from their local communities, businesses, factories, universities and even government offices. Names and addresses are being gathered by believers from China to Columbia and from Cuba to the Middle East and submitted to The Voice of the Martyrs.

You can mail New Testaments from your own home directly to communities where your persecuted brothers and sisters are now courageously witnessing. Sign up at www.BiblesUnbound.com to participate in one or more "ministry operations." (You may target your own "ministry operation," or VOM can choose one for you.) For \$30.00 per month, you will receive five or more New Testaments each month in the appropriate language, along with corresponding address labels, a description of the operation(s), packaging instructions, and the postage to mail your Bibles.

You can follow your Bibles online and see when they ar-

rive. You can also see a record of all the individuals you have mailed a New Testament to, along with updates and testimonies as they are available. An online map displays the nations where you have sent Bibles and partnered with today's persecuted church. Visit www.BiblesUnbound.com for updated information.

Prisoner Alert

Read about your brothers and sisters currently imprisoned for their faith at VOM's www.PrisonerAlert.com. This site enables you to write an encouraging letter and have it immediately translated in the prisoner's native language. You may also subscribe to the Web site's email alerts, and every month you will be notified of a new prisoner to write.

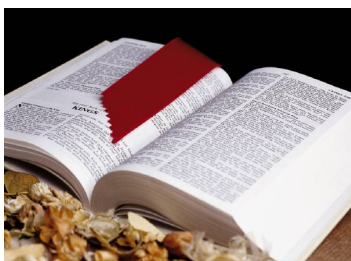
Action Packs

The Action Pack program is set up to help families in the U. S. bless persecuted Christian families and Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iraq. The Action Pack program consists of a specially preprinted vacuum bag with a zip-lock closure that allows air to be pushed out by simply rolling the vacuum bag. It will contain a complete list of items to put in the bag such as sweaters, T-shirts, towels, hats and other necessities to help families



who have lost everything, along with five additional brochures for you to share with your church or family and friends. You can also include a photo of your family or group and an encouraging note. With each Action Pack, VOM will distribute the color Gospel storybook, *He Lived Among Us*, printed in their native language. Action Packs are available from VOM for a contribution of \$7.00 each (one vacuum bag per Action Pack) to cover shipping the packs to you and then the finished packages to Pakistan and Afghanistan.

For more information on these and other projects to help our persecuted brothers and sisters, contact: **Voice of the Martyrs**, P.O. Box 443, Bartlesville, OK 74005, 918-337-8015 or 1-800-747-0085. Email: thevoice@vom-usa.org, Website: www.persecution.com



What organizations help provide Bibles for China?

Bible League
PO Box 28000
Chicago, IL 60628
www.bibleleague.org

Open Doors USA
PO Box 27001
Santa Anna, CA 92799
www.opendoorsusa.org

Voice of the Martyrs
PO Box 443
Bartlesville, OK 74003
www.persecution.com

Praying for the Persecuted Church

(This Biblical study on how to pray for the persecuted church was submitted by a friend of Eden Communications—a pastor who prefers to remain anonymous.) See also [the Handbook of Prayer for the Persecuted Church](#), from Open Doors.

Please pray that they would:

1. Have physical protection and deliverance.

Matthew 26:39 — “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”

Acts 12:5 — “So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.”

Philippians 1:19 — “For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance (from jail) through your prayers.”

Philemon 22 — “I hope that through your prayers I shall be given to you (from jail).”

Romans 15:30-31 — “Now I urge you, brethren... to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea”.

God had predicted persecution:

Acts 20:23-24 — “the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course.”

And the suffering came:

Acts 21:30-31 — “And all the city was aroused, and the people rushed together; and taking hold of Paul, they dragged him out of the temple; and... were seeking to kill him.”

2. Be given the right words to speak and would fearlessly make Christ known.

Paul tells how to pray for him when he was suffering for Christ in jail—notice his prayer was not for release.

Ephesians 6:19-20 — “Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”

Colossians 4:2-4 — “Devote yourselves to prayer... praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.”

3. See God's grace as sufficient and God's power perfected in their weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

4. Love Christ's appearing all the more.

2 Timothy 4:5-8 — “I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

Hebrews 11:35 — “...others were tortured, not accepting their re-

lease, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection.”

5. Rejoice in sharing the sufferings of Jesus so that they will rejoice even more when Christ is revealed.

Hebrews 10:34 — “...accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.”

Matthew 5:12 — “Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

1 Peter 4:13 — “but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.”

6. Endure.

Hebrews 10:36 — “For you have need of endurance.”



Praying for the Persecuted Church *(continued)*

7. Choose ill-treatment and the reproach of Christ, not pleasures of sin.

Hebrews 11:24-26 — “Moses... (chose) rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.”

8. Arm themselves with this purpose: to suffer so as to eradicate sin.

1 Peter 4:1 — “arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in flesh has ceased from sin.”

Hebrews 5:8 — “Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.”

9. Love Christ far more than life itself.

Revelation 12:10-11 — “they overcame (Satan) because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.”

Philippians 1:21 — “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Acts 20:24 — “I (Paul) do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course.”

10. Love their enemies.

Luke 6:27-31 — “But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

11. Not enter into temptation, an easy possibility under the stress of persecution

Luke 22:39-45 — Jesus in the garden.

12. Rejoice that they are considered worthy to suffer for HIS name.

Acts 5:41 — “So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.”

13. Remember they were made for such persecution.

Acts 14:22 — “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”

Philippians 1:29 — “For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”

14. Live the joy of the Lord before their persecutors.

Acts 16:25 — “But about midnight Paul and Silas (in jail) were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

Philippians 1:28 — “in no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.”

15. Remember their unbelievable future glory.

Romans 8:18 — “For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

16. Learn to more completely trust in God.

2 Corinthians 1:8-9 — “For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead.”

17. Rejoice that they bear in their bodies the “brand marks of Christ.”

Galatians 6:17 — “From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.”

18. Rejoice in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s sufferings.

Colossians 1:24 — “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.”

Note: *Our sufferings do not add to the atoning worth of Jesus’ sufferings. Rather, His sufferings are not known to the world and so we suffer to bring that news to those His sufferings were meant to save.*

For more information on the persecuted church, please visit our website at **www.epm.org** Click Browse, and search by topic Persecuted Church on the left.