

# PRAYING FOR ALL THE PERSECUTED

## 2024 Prayer Guides in Review

A tidal wave of persecution is sweeping the world, victimizing Christians and their non-Christian neighbors.

To equip ourselves for prayer and advocacy, since February of this year, we have highlighted seven countries where persecution exists. From Asia to Latin America, Africa to the Middle East, Christians have paid a high price for following Christ. But they are not alone in their suffering – people of all faiths and none suffer because of their beliefs. Whether Muslim, Baha'i, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu or Yezidis; whether agnostic or deeply spiritual, whether influenced by nature or rooted in sacred cultural heritage and traditions... our non-Christian neighbors are suffering alongside our Christian brothers and sisters.

And God—in his infinite love and mercy, having made all of humanity in his image—has called his children to a heroic love of neighbor that demands our prayers and actions. But to heroically love our neighbors as Christ calls us to do in Luke 10, we must first know our neighbors and the context in which they suffer.

Next month, the CAAP Network will cosponsor [“Praying for ALL the Persecuted: A Global Gathering,”](#) a conference at Dallas Baptist University to learn about how Christians can help persecuted believers and their oppressed non-Christian neighbors. The tagline for the October conference is [“WE ARE CALLED.”](#) Thus, for the month of September, we want to collectively look back at our 2024 prayer guides as we prepare to pray for the persecuted, together, in Dallas. Full country prayer guides can be found [here](#).

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**China.** Officially an atheist state, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) demands everyone support the party and restricts all religious practices. Groups struggle to freely access their worship sites and organize gatherings. The government seeks to eradicate distinct ethnoreligious identities and their cultures by restricting access to religious sites and destroying their places of worship. Uyghur Muslim families are especially targeted and often separated by the CCP, with many individuals subjected to heavy censorship, surveillance, jail, and even “reeducation centers.” Tibetan Buddhists are also heavily persecuted for their faith, subjected to erasure of their cultural heritage, torture, and similar reeducation centers. And Christians continue to endure threats and abuse, unable to freely gather, worship, or pray together in public across the country. Protestant churches are especially under attack, with some even having been bulldozed.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Prayer: “Lord, **drive out all fear, hate, and violence** and replace it with a renewed hope...”



**Cuba.** While its constitution claims to respect religious freedom, the Cuban Communist Party, in power for decades, attempts to manage all religious life on the island, repressing Christians and Afro-Cuban religious and spiritual groups alike. The government's Office of Religious Affairs—which is increasingly hostile towards people of faith—uses surveillance, harassment, intimidation, and interrogations to regulate religious activity throughout the island. The government requires registration of churches to legally operate, yet most of these applications are rarely approved, thus forcing churches to operate “illegally” and risk persecution. In particular, religious leaders vocal about human rights abuses face abuse, arrest, and even exile if unaligned with the government. Many times their families, including their children's safety, are threatened.

Scripture: James 1:2-5;12

Prayer: *“Increase our empathy, understanding, and concern because **you are a God of justice** and you are before all things...”*

**Pakistan.** People of faith throughout Pakistan suffer even to the point of death due to state policies that victimize minorities and allow extremists to perpetuate terrorism and hate against all. Despite being the second-largest Muslim country in the world, even Pakistani Muslims face persecution when daring to challenge the violent beliefs of terrorist groups. Religious minorities, including Ahmadi Muslims, Hindus, Shia Muslims, and Christians, face harsh forms of persecution, including from the draconian blasphemy law and increasing incidents of mob violence. Forced conversions are also prevalent with cases reported involving Hindu and Christian girls—some as young as 14 years old.

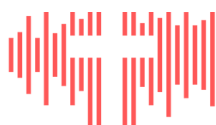
Scripture: Psalm 68:4-6

Prayer: *“Lord, we know that **you are a God of compassion and peace** and that with you, nothing is impossible...”*

**Eritrea.** One of the most repressive countries in the world, Eritrea's dictator suppresses all political and religious freedoms. This authoritarian government in the Horn of Africa only recognizes four faith groups while exerting complete control over all religious activity, requiring registration for all groups. However, since 2002, no group has successfully applied for registration, and thus, any meetings for worship or prayer are deemed “illegal.” Blasphemy and apostasy charges are prevalent in Eritrea. At the same time, members of certain communities—including Evangelicals, non-Sunni adherents of Islam, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other small, unregistered groups—face detainment in inhuman conditions.

Scripture: Amos 5:24; Proverbs 18:10

Prayer: *“We know, Lord, that you care for each and every man, woman, and child and **you want your creation to live in freedom and peace...**”*



**India.** Once a country known for interfaith tolerance and thriving pluralism, today Hindu nationalism risks undermining India’s secular foundation. Across the country in various states, a slew of “anti-conversion” laws and misinformation campaigns target Muslims and Christians alike. Anti-conversion laws penalize interfaith marriages, especially for Hindu women who wish to marry a Muslim man. These discriminatory laws have perpetuated church attacks and closures, and mob violence against Muslims. Religious and ethnic violence is particularly alarming in the northeast state of Manipur, where allegations of torture and rape exist alongside the looting and burning of places of worship and even complete villages. Reports indicate nearly 70,000 people have fled the state since 2023, and over 200 people have died as a result of the violence.

Scripture: John 16:33; Isaiah 30:18

Prayer: “Lord, **stir us to remain diligent in prayer** and supplication for the those who suffer as we pray against any and every spirit of intolerance...”

**Vietnam.** The communist government of Vietnam, while it made significant progress in protecting religious freedom from 2000-2019, is showing worrying signs of regression. Documented attacks against religious groups—particularly in rural areas, continue, while strict registration requirements continue to make life difficult in urban city centers. Government surveillance and harassment continue against ethnoreligious minorities such as Montagnard and H’mong Protestants and Khmer Krom Buddhists. Allegations of forced renouncements of faith and calls to “eradicate” certain Protestant sects have recently arisen. The government also fosters fear of “the other” through false narratives that question a community’s “loyalty to Vietnam,” while a crackdown on house churches intensifies.

Scripture: Psalm 33:22

Prayer: “We thank you that even in the midst of alarming regression, **your strength and power remain steadfast** and your eye, watchful. You continue to bestow courage, wisdom, and peace...”

**Iraq.** Over the past 20 years, Iraq has seen intense persecution of Christians, Yazidis, and other minorities at the hands of terrorists and the Iraqi federal government. Today, a federal law criminalizes the Baha’i faith and new legislation could further entrench a narrow interpretation of Islamic law that will limit religious freedoms for minorities. Already, current laws restrict the ability of individuals to convert, marry into another religion, or proselytize. Hate speech campaigns also continue to incite violence, particularly against Yazidis, even today—ten years after the world witnessed the genocidal campaign to ethnically cleanse them from Iraq. Thousands of Yazidis were murdered or sold into sexual slavery in 2014, while thousands are still missing today.

Scripture: Hebrews 6:18-20

Prayer: “Lord, **help us believe your words and promises** as we pray for your hand of protection over those suffering and for constant reminders that **it is you who is in control...**”

