

Christian Bible Publishers Murdered in Turkey

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On April 18, five Muslim men entered a Bible publishing office in Turkey and killed three Christian men, two of whom were former Muslims. The 19- to 20-year-old attackers said they were motivated by “nationalist and religious feelings.” The men entered the Zirve publishing house, located in the southeastern province of Malatya, and tied Necati Aydin, 36; Ugur Yuksel, 32; and German citizen Tilmann Geske, 46, before stabbing them repeatedly and slitting their throats, Compass Direct news service reported. “They are attacking our religion,” read a note found in the pockets of all five men. “We did this for our country. We didn’t do this for ourselves. We did it for our religion. May this be a lesson to the enemies of religion.” In the last three years reports have surfaced that Turkish government officials have contributed to the hostility toward Christians in the region because they have openly criticized Christian missionaries’ activities. Many Christians, who number just 100,000 in a nation of 74 million, claim many in Turkey distrust Christianity. The publishing house’s general manager said the staff had been receiving death threats in recent months, Compass reported. Four of the Muslim men were charged with founding a terrorist organization and murder, and one man was charged with aiding a terrorist group, Reuters news service reported.