

Persecution of Chinese Christian Churches Ramps Up

The global campaign to eliminate Christianity and the followers of Jesus Christ is as diverse as it is unrelenting.

In the Middle East and Africa, ISIS Islamists have reverted to the savagery of the Dark Ages in their genocidal tactics, liquidating churches and believers in the most barbaric ways.

In the West, the war has more subtle overtones, though its “soldiers” are as determined as ISIS to beat the Christian faith into a state of *dhimmitude* and subordinate it to Christ-hating, secular revolutionaries. That they will not succeed in destroying Christ’s body of believers can be certified by a look at history over the last 2,000 years.

In China, the antagonistic aggressor is the government, officially the Communist Party of China (CPC). The CPC bows before the altar of atheism and would have citizens of the sprawling empire embrace the godless ideology of the post-Maoist Beijing rulers.

With the phenomenal growth of China’s churches has come a crackdown of epic proportions. China Aid recently reported a 300 percent increase in religious persecution of Christians since 2013. Among the victims were 17,884 believers, including 1,592 church leaders, according to the 2014 China Aid annual report, available at :

“The Chinese government has intensified its persecution against practitioners representing all religions in China. In the case of Christianity, both the government-sanctioned Three-Self church and the house church movement experienced unprecedented persecution. The Chinese government’s persecution campaign included forced demolition of churches and crosses, the detention and imprisonment of pastors and

church members on criminal charges, forcing churches into bankruptcy by confiscating church property and imposing fines, and manipulating state-run media to label house churches as 'cult' organizations."

The Three-Self church represents congregations registered with the government. House churches, much like those in the former Soviet Union, are unregistered and, therefore, not allowed to worship in church buildings. Consequently, meetings are held in homes.

According to China Aid, approximately 70 million people attend the Three-Self and house churches. The estimate is conservative, and the number is growing rapidly.

Persecution has intensified because government officials are alarmed by the tremendous increase in the number of Chinese converts to Christ. They see the church as a threat to their regime.

In an attempt to neutralize the transforming influence of the Christian gospel, the CPC has introduced a program dubbed sinicization in Three-Self churches. The China Aid report described it as follows:

"The essence of Christian sinicization is to prioritize loyalty to the CPC over religious identity and transform Christianity into a socialist force that complies with the authority of the Chinese government. The process of the sinicization of Christianity has included Chinese churches abandoning relationships with the global church, dissolving the core of the Christian faith, and preventing Christianity from exercising its social and cultural influence to positively influence Chinese society. Therefore, the sinicization of Christianity amounts to de-Christianizing the church in China and eradicating the universal nature of Christianity under the appearance of constructing a 'Christianity with Chinese characteristics,' and, in the name

of prioritizing the interests of the Communist Party, usurping Christian doctrine that 'Christ is the head of Church.'"

Sinicization is reminiscent of Adolf Hitler's national Reich church of 1936. There, the swastika replaced the cross, and the Fuhrer's *Mein Kampf* replaced the Bible. Only invited Nazis were allowed to preach.

In the eyes of tyrannical regimes, such devices are a must if they are to achieve their dream of totally annexing the governing system and the mind, soul and body of every individual.

Although methods may differ, the objective is always the same: demean, discriminate, disenfranchise, criminalize, then destroy. And to every despot who lives that dream, Jesus Christ is always an obstacle to be removed.

Few have labored more diligently to eliminate God than the Communists—or, for that matter, liberal, secular progressives. Will success be theirs?

China is splendid affirmation why it will not. Wrote China Aid, "Dr. Yang Fenggang, a professor of religion and sociology at Purdue University, has estimated that by 2030, the number of Christians in China will exceed those in the United States, thus making China the largest Christian nation in the world."

Through peace in Christ that passes all understanding, come "Chinese citizens who embrace rule of law, oppose totalitarian governance and support the expansion of civil society," said China Aid. And that type of freedom is something thugs with guns, torture rooms and prison cells will never comprehend.

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