

These Are the 5 Most Dangerous Places for Christians to Live

For the 16th consecutive year, North Korea is ranked as the most oppressive place in the world for Christians, according to the international non-profit ministry Open Doors.

Every year, Open Doors publishes the World Watch List to highlight the plight of persecuted Christians around the world. The list represents believers “who are arrested, harassed, tortured—even killed—for their faith.” The list measures the degree of freedom a Christian has to live out their faith in five spheres of life (private, family, community, national and church) plus a sixth sphere measuring the degree of violence.

Here are the top five countries listed by Open Doors as being the most dangerous for Christians:

1. North Korea

Leader: Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un

Government: Communist Dictatorship

Population: 25,405,000 (300,000 Christians)

Main Religion: Atheism, Traditional Beliefs

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Communist Oppression, Dictatorial Paranoia

Comment: “In this totalitarian communist state, Christians are forced to hide their faith completely from government authorities, neighbors and often, even their own spouses and

children.”

2. Somalia

Leader: President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud

Government: Federal republic

Population: 11,392,000 (a few hundred Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Extremism, Ethical Antagonism

Comment: “Since the downfall of Ziad Barre in 1991, Somalia has become a safe haven for Islamic militants. Christian converts from Islam in the country have been facing a great deal of persecution, and martyrdom is very common. The mere suspicion of one’s having renounced Islam leads to a rushed public execution.”

3. Afghanistan

Leader: President Ashraf Ghani

Government: Republic

Population: 34,169,000 (thousands of Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Oppression, Organized Corruption and Crime

Comment: “Many who convert from Islam to Christianity are murdered once their extended families learn of their new faith. In other families, Christian converts are delivered to mental hospitals under the premise that no one in their right

mind would ever choose to leave Islam.”

4. Pakistan

Leader: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif

Government: Republic

Population: 196,744,000 (3,938,000 Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Oppression, Organized Corruption and Crime

Comment: “Historical Christian communities exist openly, but have to put up with stringent rules and constant monitoring, while Christian converts from Islam suffer the brunt of persecution from both radical Islamic groups and families and neighbors. Protestant Christian communities are under close scrutiny and suffer frequent attacks, especially when they are active in outreach amongst Muslims. Violent persecution is common.”

5. Sudan

Leader: President Omar al-Bashir

Government: Republic

Population: 42,166,000 (1,996,000 Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Oppression, Dictatorial paranoia

Comment: “Persecution in the country is systematic and

reminiscent of ethnic cleansing. Under the authoritarian rule of al-Bashir and his party, there is no true rule of law in Sudan; freedom of expression has been almost entirely curtailed.” {eoa}

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