

Andrew Brunson Urges Prayer for Religious Freedom Summit, July 13-15

A special inaugural event billed as the “Inaugural Convening of the Premier Annual Religious Freedom Summit in the U.S.” will be held to bring together “a broad coalition that passionately supports religious freedom around the globe for a three-day, in-person event in Washington, D.C., July 13-15, with a virtual option for participation,” per the event website, .

Among the speakers is Andrew Brunson, the missionary who after 23 years of service in Turkey was imprisoned and released in 2018 during a challenge made for his freedom in the middle of the 2018 Religious Freedom Ministerial.

Brunson is surprisingly pessimistic about the worldwide rise in persecution, particularly in the U.S., saying, “I see in the United States an increasing hostility to those who are faithful followers of Jesus especially on two wedge issues: his exclusivity in salvation and his demands for obedience in a number of areas that are hotly contested in our culture, such as sexual morality, gender identity, marriage, life and justice. I don’t want to compare persecution in the United States to the more intense persecution which we see in other parts of the world—as I myself experienced in a Turkish prison—but it is real and growing.”

Brunson is encouraged by the upcoming Religious Freedom Summit, co-chaired by former Sen. Sam Brownback and Katrina Swett, president of the Lantos Foundation. The event will gather an impressive list of organizations worldwide defending the cause of religious freedom as well as key leaders including Sen. Jim Lankford, R-Okla.; Lord David Alton;

longtime religious freedom advocate Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J.; former Congressman Frank Wolf, the “father of the religious freedom movement” in the U.S.; Asia Bibi, the Pakistani Christian freed after a worldwide outcry; Joy Bishara, one of the Christians abducted in Chibok, Nigeria by terrorist group Boko Haram; Miriam Ibraheem and others.

The place to be for all those concerned for religious freedom, not only for the speakers, but also to build relationships and networks, the summit is filling up quickly, and organizers ask that anyone interested visit to sign up as well as invite friends to sign up for the livestream if unable to attend in person.

“The U.S. has been the main promotor of religious freedom, but the reality is that governments rarely use the various kinds of leverage they have on behalf of the persecuted,” Brunson says. “In my case, I was set free after two years of unprecedented engagement—many people advocated for me, many Christians contacted their political representatives, and eventually the U.S. imposed sanctions on Turkey. My case is an example of what can be done.”

Bestselling author Stephen E. Strang, quotes Oklahoma Sen. James Lankford in his book *God, Trump and the 2020 Election: God, Trump and the 2020 Election*: “Confirmation of Sam Brownback as Ambassador-at-Large [for International Religious Freedom] sends a message to the world that religious freedom is a priority of the United States government.”

Brunson’s words of caution reflect 2 Timothy 3:12, “Yes, and all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” as people gather from across the globe in Washington, D.C., July 13-15.

Brunson’s words are a reminder that 80% of the world’s population lives in some form of religious persecution, with approximately 80% of that persecution of Christians and 80% of

the persecution occurring in Mohammedan countries. Fifty-seven nations in the Organization of Islamic Unity (OIC) are charged to protect these, but only two countries, Hungary and Poland, are charged with protecting Christians.

Join in prayer for the International Freedom Summit every day at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. Eastern. For those in the Washington, D.C., area, 12 p.m. on Capitol Hill and 2 p.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel with information at irfsummitprayer@eoanet.org

Amir George directs *The World Helpline* at www.worldhelpline.org. To help in these efforts, [click here](#).

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