

Christian Pastor Exposes Truth About Syria

“The violence has pushed people out of their homes, fleeing for their lives. Many are displaced internally and many others are external refugees living in the most humiliating circumstances, deprived of even shelter, clean water, power, food and medical care.”

That is the lament to Christians in the West from a Christian **pastor in Syria**, describing the deteriorating, horrific conditions in the war-torn country.

He adds: “Millions are not sleeping in their own beds, forced out of their homes to find themselves with their children homeless and living in public parks or in the wilderness. Others are not sure if they or their children and loved ones will see the light of a new day. Tens of thousands of families lost loved ones—a child, a father, a mother or a husband.

“Hundreds of the injured died for lack of medical care. Thousands of children go to bed terrified of the sound of shelling. Hundreds of thousands are in camps in neighboring countries.

“My people are hurting. I can cry like Nehemiah because the walls of our cities are burnt and the people in great trouble and disgrace. I can weep like Jeremiah because of the intensity and the spread of evil. I can mourn like David because of the indiscriminate brutal killing of innocent people; children, women, elderly, youth subject to shelling or under the rubble of their homes.”

Over the past 20 months the civil war between President Bashar al-Assad’s forces and the Free Syrian Army has resulted in approximately 30,000 deaths, mostly civilians, according to several reports. Hundreds of thousands of Syrians have fled

the country into such neighboring countries as Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon, according to the United Nations. In addition, about 2.5 million Syrians need aid inside the country, with more than 1.2 million displaced domestically.

Places especially dangerous for Christians include the cities of Aleppo and Homs.

“A lot is being destroyed in Aleppo,” one of Open Doors’ contacts in the city says. “Extreme violence is being experienced in the last few weeks. You can see the results of it in the old city and in other neighborhoods and surrounding villages. There is a lot of destruction.”

Many Christians in Aleppo have lost their houses or apartments. “We see that their apartments are easily confiscated by the rebels to be used for snipers,” the spokesman states. “The Christian community is the only group that doesn’t fight back or doesn’t protect property with guns. So when the rebels search a place to stay or to use for their battle, they choose the houses and apartments of the softest target—the Christians.”

Based on information from Syria, Open Doors thinks that the number of internally displaced people “might be higher than thought,” an Open Doors spokesman says. “For example, I heard that only from Homs and the surrounding villages about 275,000 people have fled.”

The Christian pastor says outreach continues despite the terrible conditions.

“We are here for a divine reason; we trust and rely on our sovereign loving Lord. We believe that we are in the midst of a spiritual war. In this country there are many who are much more effective than us militarily, politically, economically and socially, but none have the privilege of being effective in this spiritual battle like we are.

"We thank God because the Church is united across the country in prayer 24 hours a day, seven days a week; praying for the glory of God to dwell in the Church, praying for an end to the bloodshed, praying for peace in the country, praying for keeping the church's faithful witness, to reach out to the suffering, to share the divine cure of the gospel, to speak the word of the Lord in all boldness."

Open Doors is supporting churches doing relief work in several Syrian cities.

The pastor adds: "We deeply appreciate the prayers of God's people everywhere; it is a rare time where the Church in Syria is feeling the true oneness of the body of Christ all over the globe. For this, we thank the Lord, for it is a great encouragement to us."