

Christian Persecution is Escalating: Why the World Ignores It

Persecution is not a thing of the past. Across the world, Christians are being targeted, imprisoned, displaced and even killed for their faith. The numbers are staggering and the stories are heartbreaking. Yet in many churches, the crisis is barely discussed.

Billy Hallowell of CBN News sat down with Isaac Six, senior director of advocacy for Global Christian Relief, to discuss the 2025 Red List, a new report that exposes the most dangerous places in the world for Christians. This is not just another set of statistics. It is a wake-up call to believers everywhere.

A Report Unlike Any Other

Christian persecution reports are published each year, but this one is different. The Red List is built entirely on verifiable, public sources through what is called the Violent Incidents Database. Unlike some reports that rely on estimates or interviews, this database only includes cases that are fully confirmed.

Six explained why this is important. "We found there needed to be a report that was based entirely on well-verified, carefully reviewed sources" so that leaders and policymakers can "go in and say wait where did this come from who said this happened." This means the numbers may look lower than other reports, but they "are verified and irrefutable."

The real numbers are likely much worse. "You're dealing in many cases in restrictive reclusive countries like North Korea where you're trying to pull data" Six explained. "The problem

of persecution is much worse probably than we even are able to report on.”

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The Deadliest Place for Christians

Some of the findings are not surprising. Nigeria continues to be the most dangerous country in the world for believers. The numbers speak for themselves. Over 10,000 Christians have been murdered there in the past two years alone.

“These are not just numbers” Six emphasized. “The church in America really has to hear how horrific some of these stories are” because the reality is brutal. “Violence is actually the primary method through which persecutors are trying to drive out the church trying to crush the church.”

Groups like Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province are leading this slaughter with a single goal. “The overarching goal here is to crush the church and extinguish it” Six warned.

For comparison, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the second-most dangerous country for Christians, saw only 390 killings in the same time frame. The contrast is staggering.

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The Surprise Entry on the List

The report does not just highlight the usual places. One unexpected name appeared high on the list of Christian killings, Russia.

“Russia’s mixed, it appears twice on a report both for killings and also for arrests” Six explained. Much of the violence is happening in Dagestan, where Islamic militants are

targeting Orthodox Russian Christians, priests and churches.

Persecution is also happening in eastern Ukraine under Russian occupation. “I remember working on a case where they executed several Pentecostal pastors who refused to hand over their church buildings” Six said. These killings and mass arrests are forcing many churches underground.

Why This Matters for Christians

The persecution of believers has never been about politics or culture. It has always been a spiritual war. Jesus warned that his followers would be hated. “If they persecuted Me they will persecute you also” (John 15:20). The Bible makes it clear that suffering for the faith is a reality, but it also calls on Christians to stand with their persecuted brothers and sisters.

The 2025 Red List is more than a report. It is a call to action. Six emphasized the urgency by pointing to what is missing from the American church. “Only a fraction of believers in America are even aware of what’s happening” he said. That must change.

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What Can Be Done Now

The first step is awareness. Christians need to know what is happening. The full 2025 Red List is available at [www.redlistreport.org](#), where believers can download the report and see the data for themselves.

The second step is prayer. Six made it clear that persecuted Christians themselves have one main request. “They’re always asking for prayer first and foremost” he said. Global Christian Relief provides a prayer guide based on specific

requests from those who have been kidnapped, imprisoned, and displaced for their faith.

For policymakers, there are specific recommendations in the report that can influence government action and provide real support to persecuted Christians. The database allows leaders to see verifiable evidence and take steps to pressure oppressive regimes.

A Time for the Church to Act

Jesus did not call his followers to ignore suffering. The 2025 Red List exposes a crisis that cannot be overlooked. Six was direct about the challenge ahead. “We need a wave of support and prayer coming out of the American church and the global church for the areas where the body of Christ is just being attacked in the worst possible ways.”

Persecution is not going away. It is getting worse. Christians must stand with our brothers and sisters, raise awareness, pray and act. The church in America has a choice. It can ignore the suffering of fellow believers, or it can rise up and be the voice they desperately need.

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