

Christians Executed for Faith More Than Double Previous Years

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association will hold a World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians in Washington, D.C., on May 10-13, 2017.

Hundreds of evangelical leaders from about 100 countries will come together to talk about the mass persecution of Christians in the Middle East, Africa and other regions of the world.

“It seems that every week we learn of another example from a part of the globe that shows how critically we need to have this World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians,” Franklin Graham said Tuesday in a post on his Facebook page.

Rev. Viktor Hamm, Vice President of Crusade Ministries with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) said this summit will allow the ministry “to support those who are persecuted [and] call the attention of the world to the fact of persecution.”

“If one part of the body suffers, everyone suffers, and we are responsible for our brothers and sisters,” Hamm said. “And [Christians] should have taken that responsibility years ago.”

Christians in more than 60 countries face persecution from their governments or surrounding neighbors simply because of their belief in Jesus Christ, according to the United States Department of State. This abuse can include beatings, physical torture, imprisonment, severe punishment, isolation, rape and even death.

These types of attacks on such a large scale are unprecedented in modern history, as noted by Franklin Graham, who said 2015

was “just reported in the media as the worst year for Christian persecution.”

He added that “more than twice as many Christians were killed for their faith than in the previous year—making it the worst in history since these statistics have been tracked.”

About 150 persecuted Christians are expected to attend the summit and many will share their stories during breakout sessions.

Among other features, the summit will include a gallery of faith showing the history of persecution in pictures. In addition, there will be a large arch with screens scrolling the names of thousands of Christian martyrs, “a living reminder of our heritage of the church,” Hamm said.

“The World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians will shed a global spotlight on this crisis,” Franklin Graham said. “We will bring delegates from around the world and will be able to join hands with people of other churches and denominations of the Christian faith to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ and to hear firsthand reports of the suffering that is taking place.

“Will you pray with us for this historic summit?”