

Could The Taliban's Oppression Be Pushing Afghans to Jesus?

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While the Taliban boldly proclaims there are no more Christians within Afghanistan, whether by denial or because they truly believe that, followers of Jesus in the underground church are risking their lives to stay within the country to continue to spread the gospel under the radical regime.

"There are still Christians in Afghanistan," Voice of the Martyrs spokesman Todd Nettleton told Fox News. When the radical Islamists took over the country on August 15, 2021, there was a lot of talk that Nettleton believes perpetuated the idea that all Christians had fled the country.

It is imperative that the global church realizes that although they can't see what is going on, the body of Christ must labor in prayer for those who are giving up everything for Jesus.

Voice of the Martyrs say, "a special unity among Christians laboring for the gospel in Afghanistan. Indigenous, near-culture and expatriate believers are boldly taking risks and using every possible opportunity to help believers grow in faith and connect with local house churches."

The group says there has been significant Christian growth among the Hazara people who are in desperate need of the life changing power of the gospel. According to Al Jazeera, the Hazara ethnic population is at high risk under the Taliban.

One of many groups staying connected to the underground church is International Christian Concern (ICC). ICC is in direct communication with a number of families currently hiding from

the Taliban. "Some are in quite a serious situation, with the Taliban conducting sweeps of entire neighborhoods or districts," Claire Evans, ICC's Middle East spokeswoman told VOA News.

It's not just important, but crucial, that the Western church starts praying and fasting for their brothers and sisters in Christ who are facing torture every day for choosing to follow Jesus in Afghanistan. The emboldened believers chose to stay and spread the message of hope in a country clouded by such wickedness despite the fact that they could be tortured and killed.

Nettleton says, "The first line of persecution is your family members, it's your neighbors." Muslims who convert to Christianity and fail to show up at their local mosque become suspicious to those around them.

The extreme, radical Islamists running Afghanistan today paint a picture for those in the country of what it really means to follow the Quran and live under their oppressive regime. The one benefit of this is that people's eyes and hearts are being awakened to the evil and are open to hearing the gospel.

Here's how you can pray for the underground church:

- Peace and safety for all believers and their families
- That God would continue to strengthen, guide and teach them His word
- God would send people in with Bibles and resources
- Through the persecution that all of the believers would persevere and cling to their faith
- The Holy Spirit would go before them to direct their steps on who to witness to and where to go
- The Afghan people to continue to open their hearts to the message of Jesus

As the news cycle continues to evolve and change daily the body of Christ needs to remain vigilant in praying for those

suffering persecution globally. The number one request out of the underground church in Afghanistan is prayer.

The Bible says in Matthew 21:22, "And whatever you ask in prayer, if you believe, you will receive."

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