

Hundreds of Christians Die While Worshipping as Earthquake Rocks Churches

Hundreds of Nepalese Christians died as their churches crashed down upon them when last week's devastating earthquake hit during their weekly worship services.

In Nepal, Christians worship on Saturday because it's a day off, while Sunday is a work day. Most services last until 12:30 in the afternoon, meaning most were still in service when the quake hit at 11:56 a.m.

"Many Christians were buried while they were worshipping on Sabbath and died," the president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nepal, Umesh Pokharel said, according to an article by *Christianity Today*. (The article cited several sources, including: Adventist Review, AsiaNews, Global Mission Nepal, the Brethren in Christ Church, Mission Network News, the Assemblies of God, the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Christian Aid Mission, and the Nepal Church of Christ.)

The CT article cites a Facebook post by a Brethren in Christ Church worker: "Although unclear some have reported 100 believers in a church in Kathmandu were worshipping on the 7th floor rented building was completely collapsed, some 40 bodies were taken out whereas others still missing."

About 80 people died when the Nepali Evangelical Church in Kapan outside Kathmandu collapsed.

Seventeen bodies were discovered in the rubble of a rural church that was struck just as the service was ending, according to the IMB. The pastor reportedly lost three family members in the tragedy.

Assemblies of God World Missions reports that three of its churches are totally destroyed and several lives lost.

Christian Aid Mission said several churches had just let out ahead of the quake, including one in Kathmandu.

“Ten minutes earlier and everyone would still have been inside,” said Christian Aid Mission’s South Asia director. “There would have certainly been many injuries, if not deaths.”

Overall, approximately 500 Christians are feared dead.