

Persecution Not Stopping 'Jesus' in India

It's Passion Week around the world—a time that often is marred by violence from those who oppose **Christianity**. Christians in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East are praying protection upon Christians as they begin remembering Christ during **Good Friday** and **Resurrection Sunday**. One group that's not backing down from their efforts to share Jesus is the Jesus Film Project.

George Mason, associate director of Asia Field Strategy for the Jesus Film Project, says its India partners will be airing the *Jesus* film on national television across the country on Resurrection Sunday. "Back in 2000 we did a special millennial edition to honor the 2000th birthday of Jesus," he says. "And when we showed it on television in India, we got estimates of over 500 million people watching that show."

Mason says while there may be many who typically **reject Christ**, Easter is a great time for *Jesus*. "Special occasions like Easter are just so good because it draws people's interest, even if they may not have been interested before. They know it's a Christian holiday," Mason says. "They're just interested, so they watch the movies to see what it's about."

Is Mason concerned that showing the film will cause more persecution? "I don't think we're concerned it will cause more problems, but those problems do continue to escalate and we are **praying** that the Christians will be able to stand strong in their faith—that they won't give up and not recant their faith."

While the *Jesus* film is already available in India, not everyone can watch the film due to language barriers. Mason says the *Jesus* film is available in about 96 Indian languages and his team is working on translating the film into at least

30 more languages spoken by 50,000 or more people there.

“There’s a whole process of getting a script written from the Gospel of Luke,” Mason says. “Some of these smaller languages don’t even have a written script. So there are all kinds of challenges that we face in getting the languages completed.”

In order to do that, they need qualified people to do the work. And there are funding needs. “The vast majority of funds we need are for implementation and strategy using this film,” Mason says. “You can fund a language for about \$40,000, but it costs many times more than that to actually see the thing put into use.”