

Satanic Church Openly Celebrates as Christians Hide for Their Lives

The Satanic Church of Russia celebrated their one-year anniversary by cheering the Jehovah's Witness ban.

Russia banned the cult in April, claiming their tactics were "extremist." It's just the latest crackdown on religious-affiliated groups in the former soviet country.

"We consider it necessary to speak out against missionary activity," Satanic Church leader Oleg Sataninsky tells Russian news site as reported by *The Moscow Times*. "The Jehovah's Witnesses had an extreme approach. We oppose indoctrination and religious propaganda."

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia failed to have strong religious freedom protection.

According to *Newsweek*, anti-extremism laws came into effect in 2002, following Russia's second war in Chechnya and the 9/11 attacks in the United States.

Then in 2016, the country imposed the Yarovaya Law, allegedly aimed to combat terrorism. Churches and missionaries feared these regulations would halt the spread of the gospel.

The Yarovaya Law banned proselytizing, preaching and praying outside of "specifically designated places," like officially recognized religions.

As the law took effect, 7000 churches and missionaries across the country began fasting and praying.

Missionary Donald Ossewaarde was arrested under the new regulations.

Police stormed into his Bible study and arrested him in front of 15 students.

Ossewaarde is not the only foreign missionary to be prosecuted under the new restrictions.

According to Fox News, the following have faced persecution:

- Sergei Zhuravlyov, a Ukrainian Reformed Orthodox Church of Christ representative, was arrested for preaching in St. Petersburg.
- Ebenezer Tuah of Ghana, the leader of the Christ Embassy church, was arrested and fined 50,000 rubles for conducting baptisms at a sanatorium in the city of Tver.
- Jim Mulcahy, a 72-year-old American pastor who is the Eastern European coordinator for the Metropolitan Community Church, was arrested and deported under the prohibition of missionary activities at non-religious sites.