

South Korean Church Leader Urges Prayer for North Korea

As the world continues to react to the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, concern for the stability of the region and the future of the country's oppressed citizens is rising.

"North Korea is at a critical juncture. It is imperative that Christians around the world pray for the Lord to open doors for the gospel to spread in the country," Jonathan Racho, International Christian Concern's (ICC) regional manager for South Asia. "Please pray for revival to break out in North Korea and for the Lord to restore His glory to cities like Pyongyang, which was once known as the Jerusalem of the East."

ICC spoke with a South Korean church leader, Sam Kim, to find out how South Korean Christians are responding to the news. Kim is the executive director of the Korean Church Coalition for North Korea Freedom, a coalition fighting for the freedom, human rights, and dignity of the North Korean people.

South Korea is on high alert, Kim says, because "past history informs us that immediately after a crisis, the North Korean government follows the same predictable cycle: [a] series of hostile activity as evidenced by missile or nuclear test ... followed by a more aggressive hostile act."

Kim warned that as "the world just witnessed a missile test immediately after the death of Kim Jong Il ... Christians need to pray that the latest missile test will not be followed by additional more aggressive hostile acts."

It remains unclear if the death of Kim Jong II will result in a deterioration of conditions for persecuted Christians in the country that is largely considered the world's worst persecutor of Christians. More than 50,000 Christians are believed to be kept in the country's infamous labor camps for

their faith in Christ.

“Currently, there are many Christian missionaries and underground house churches operating in North Korea,” Kim says. “If captured, they face imprisonment and even public execution.”

When asked how Christians could pray for North Korea, Kim said, Christians around the world need to pray that the sacrifices of the many believers over the past 65 years in North Korea will finally bear fruit, and that the cross of our Lord Jesus will once again prominently be erected in Pyongyang Square.

“Until that day,” he continues, “the member pastors of the Korean Church Coalition for North Korea Freedom and the Christian community around the world will not rest nor stop praying, and with our Lord on our side, we will not fail.”