

The Shocking Truth About Christian Persecution

Editors Note: This is a first in a series of speech texts from last Friday's conference at the United Nations titled, "Not Peace but a Sword: The Persecution of Christians in the Middle East as a Threat to International Peace and Security." First up is Rick Scarborough, the founder of Vision America, an organization whose mission is to "inform and mobilize Pastors and their congregations to become salt and light, becoming pro-active in restoring Judeo-Christian values in America."

Rick Scarborough

My esteemed friends and colleagues,

Recently David Cameron, the prime minister of the United Kingdom, touched on the phenomenon of Christian persecution in Muslim lands during his Easter address to his nation:

We have a duty to speak out about the persecution of Christians around the world. It is truly shocking that in 2015 there are still Christians being threatened, tortured, even killed because of their faith. From Egypt to Nigeria, Libya to North Korea. Across the Middle East, Christians have been hounded out of their homes, forced to flee from village to village; many of them forced to renounce their faith or brutally murdered. To all those brave Christians in Iraq and Syria who practice their faith or shelter others, we will say, "We stand with you."

All Christians everywhere in the world, have an obligation to shout this message to the World and especially to our brethren who suffer in the Middle East: "We stand with you."

The prime minister made another statement in his address that is salient: He said: "(W)e should feel proud to say, 'This is

a Christian country.' Yes, we're a nation that embraces, welcomes and accepts all faiths and none, but we are a Christian country.

A trademark distinction of Christianity is that everywhere it becomes the dominant religion of a country, other religions are allowed to flourish in religious freedom.

Christianity is a religion of choice, not coercion. Christians advance their message by love and influence, believing that where there is a freedom for people to make their own choice, based upon a fair presentation of truth, the majority of people will choose the religion that is based upon the tenet: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Governments have a vested interest in protecting Christianity, for in its purity it creates fertile soil for diversity and the free exchange of ideas. Christianity is a religion that flows from a loving God who gave up His life for mankind and who rewards kindness and benevolent living, both in this life and the life to come.

The significant blessings that follow Christianity in every nation where it is allowed to flourish are both remarkable and unmistakable. That there those who seek to remove Christianity from the earth is tragic and their efforts must be confronted and stopped.

There is no greater offender on earth than ISIS jihadis.

The church in the West has a role to play in defending innocent Christians who are being slaughtered in the greatest persecution of a minority since the days of Nazi Germany.

Every free Christian must understand that we ARE our brother's keeper. Our collective silence regarding the persecution of Christians in the Middle East is deafening. Such silence

deserves condemnation equally, as do the perpetrators of unspeakable atrocities upon innocent people whose only crime is the chose to follow Jesus.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer famously said, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil; God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not act is to act."

Unfortunately many church attendees do not want to hear about or think about, Christians being slaughtered for their faith in distant lands like Syria and Iraq. It makes their comfortable life unpleasant. But that must end today.

Men of God, it is our duty to make Christians uncomfortable and that's not popular in today's American Christianity.

Pastors, if you want to be popular, choose another profession. Pastors and church leaders must educate and mobilize the American Church to stand up and speak out on the plight of their brethren in the Middle East for two reasons:

Because the Scripture commands it: Hebrews 13:3 in the New Living Translation states: "Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies."

Because of the Law of Sowing and Reaping: Galatians 6:7: "For whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."

If we remain silent on this issue, we can be sure our day of persecution and suffering will come to Christians in the West. In fact, the forces are lining up now to silence the church and force Christians to deny their deeply held beliefs when it conflicts with popular culture.

It is not hard to imagine a day when persecution of Christians in the West could be a reality. Our best hope to delay it is connected to our willingness to speak on behalf of others.

We cannot simply Sing Louder!

We must do what we can;

When we can;

Wherever we can;

For as long as we can.

Christians who do nothing make God sick.

Revelations 3: "I know your works, ye are neither cold or hot"

Rick Scarborough is the founder of Vision America, an organization whose mission is to "inform and mobilize Pastors and their congregations to become salt and light, becoming pro-active in restoring Judeo-Christian values in America."