

What Libya's Civil War Means for Evangelism

Rebel troops are fighting for freedom in Libya. But Libya Dictator Muammar Gaddafi's troops on have forced the rebels out of their Brega stronghold.

Now, Libyan rebels are criticizing NATO for not doing enough to help. The anti-government forces only have about 1,000 official military troops to lead hundreds of untrained civilians with a passion for freedom.

Clearly, the unrest in Libya is different than in other Middle Eastern nations. Although anti-government protests have turned violent in Yemen and Syria—and although tensions continue rising across the Middle East—there is a true civil war in Libya.

Charisma News caught up with Dr. Mark Gabriel, who was born and raised in Egypt as a Muslim before converting to Christianity, changing his name, and moving to the U.S., to discuss his take on Libya and the future of the evangelism in the Middle Eastern nation.

Charisma News: What are your observations on Libya?

Gabriel: These coming days are going to be difficult days for Libya and the Libyans. The violence is going to increase severely in these coming days. It has reached a very serious stage. But my expectation is that the Libyan people will win the battle. And they will throw the Gaddafi regime away. These things are going to take time and many, many people are going to die.

Charisma News: How is what's going on in Libya different than what happened in Egypt?

Gabriel: The regime of Libya who has controlled the nation for the past 42 years radicalized the nation. The Libyan people are very tough. When you deal with Libyan people, you'll find yourself dealing with very harsh and tough people. This toughness is because of the Bedouin lifestyle. The Bedouin is a tribal system of Arabs that you don't see in Egypt.

At the same time the influence of this regime in the past 42 years has brought nothing to civilize to educate the nation. So you're dealing with people that are very, very aggressive, both the people who are demonstrating and the people who are allies with Gaddafi himself.

Therefore, the conflict in Libya is taking a totally different direction than Egypt or Tunisia. I believe the people are going to win the battle and the regime of Gaddafi is going to be crushed somehow.

Charisma News: What happens then? How will a victory for the people change the face of Libya?

Gabriel: I have very positive feelings that the Libyan people are going to put their foot in the right position and start a new page. Libya is very open to the world community. This is why we have to pray for these Libyan people who are demonstrating and fighting against this regime. We will pray for their liberty there because God is going to glorify Himself through this difficult situation. When the change happens the country will become a democratic society. Then you're going to see total liberty and freedom for Christians to go there and live there and share the gospel.