

Jesus' Prophetic Words in John 16:33 Are a Reality Too Close to Ignore

The subject of Christian persecution has taken on a renewed focus for the American Pastors Network (APN) in 2018, as APN leaders regularly address this global problem through its radio ministry "Stand in the Gap Today."

APN President and "Stand in the Gap Today" host Sam Rohrer has written a new commentary for The Christian Post titled, "Christian Persecution: A Reality Too Close to Ignore."

"Violent persecution of Christians around the world has risen to all-time highs," Rohrer writes. "Murders, beheadings, rapes, imprisonments and evil of all types are increasingly befalling Christians. This ugly reality demands a response. While Christian persecution is nothing new, today it comes in various forms and for various reasons.

"How shall American Christians respond when their spiritual brethren are suffering persecution?" he continues. "The choices are only two: ignore it or responsibly respond to it. Ignoring anti-Christian violence is convenient and painless, but it is also anti-biblical. Turning from it may temporarily relieve our uneasiness and numb our sense of moral obligation, but we only fool ourselves. Willful ignorance of evil is fatal because it provides an illusory sense of peace. Ignoring evil cannot stop it, especially when it is aggressively on the march like it is today."

It's time for Christians, churches and pastors to wake up, Rohrer added. While persecution of Christians spreads like a virulent global cancer, fellow believers must ask: How far has it metastasized? Where is it happening, and what drives it?

According to trustworthy organizations like Open Doors USA and The Voice of the Martyrs, there is more persecution of Christians today than at any other time in history. On average, 255 Christians are murdered, 104 are abducted, 180 Christian women are raped, sexually harassed or forced into marriage, 66 churches are attacked, and 160 Christians are detained or imprisoned without trial because of their faith. These numbers represent only what is known. And according to the U.S. State Department, Christians in more than 60 countries face persecution from their governments or their neighbors because of their personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Rohrer pointed to North Korea, whose blood relatives include regimes built on Marxism, Communism, Fascism or Nazism, as well as to Islamic ideology that teaches Muslims to hate Christians because they will not knuckle to false gods, and who are spiritually and mentally set free.

“Islamists aren’t the only threat Christians face,” Rohrer adds. “Despotic governments are well-known Christian persecutors. North Korea sits atop the list of nations systematically targeting Christians, followed by Afghanistan, Somalia, Pakistan and Sudan. Persecution is on the rise in China and India as well. These facts should grip the heart of every American Christian. As we empathize and identify with our brothers and sisters in these lands, we must also acknowledge signs of persecution popping up within our own borders. This is not a time for ignorance.”

The rise of anti-Christian ideologies in the 20th century resulted in more sheer death and destruction than occurred in all of history up until then, Rohrer added. The number of those killed in world wars, purges and genocides is so large that historians can’t agree on the totals. A conservative estimate is that from 150 million to 200 million people were killed, starved or dead of disease as a direct result of actions of 20th century regimes built on anti-Christian values.

"Today, the most egregious and aggressive source of Christian persecution worldwide is Islam. Whether Sunni, Shiite or Sufi, this destructive ideology mandates its followers kill, rape or otherwise persecute all who will not bow to their false Prophet Muhammad," says Rohrer. "Islam spread rapidly through violence in the seventh century. Nothing has changed. Today, in addition to Jews, Christians are directly in Islam's crosshairs."

"Christians must first know about the violence befalling Christians in other nations and responsibly respond," he concludes. "Boldly telling the truth about such relevant issues is one of the primary objectives of the American Pastors Network. Pastors must speak to the issue. Being silent means enabling. The first step is learning. Then fervent effectual prayer must be made on behalf of suffering Christians in these places far off the radar screen of our everyday lives."

In recent shows, Rohrer and other "Stand in the Gap Today" co-hosts have welcomed multiple guests to the show to help raise awareness about numerous worldwide incidents of Christians suffering for their beliefs.

APN is also a member of the newly formed Save the Persecuted Christians Coalition, which has the mission to protect Christians worldwide who are suffering discrimination, torture, rape, slavery, banishment and murder—simply because they believe in Jesus Christ.

"Stand in the Gap Today," which airs on 425 stations nationwide, can be heard live online from noon to 1 p.m. EST at American Pastors at the orange "Listen Live" button on the right-hand side of the web page; find a station [here](#).